

BLUE CIRCLE

COMICS

10¢
F.D.C.

NO.
3



SEPTEMBER
ISSUE



WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM

10 POWER TELESCOPE

Here's The Only FULL 10-POWER Telescope At This Price In America Today

It's Precision Built! Makes Far Away Objects Stand Out Clear—Sharp—BIG AS LIFE!

Here's the only full 10-POWER Telescope being offered in America today at the unheard-of low price of only 98c. Easily the most outstanding telescope value you'll find anywhere. You'd expect to pay up to \$10.00 and more for such power. And anyone who knows telescopes will tell you a good 10-Power telescope is worth all of that. But now, due to a fortunate purchase, we are able to offer you this 10-POWER Precision-built Telescope at a sensational bargain. Don't confuse it with small "weak-vision" telescopes. This one is high-powered and measures a full 16 inches. The lenses are of fine optically-ground polished glass—a product of one of America's leading optical houses. The case is durable and extends easily. Focuses instantly on stationary or moving objects—brings them 10 times closer. With the country at war, everybody needs a telescope like this—to spot airplanes, to identify distant objects, to bring into sharp, easy vision people, animals, signs, houses—which may be beyond the range of the naked eye. Valuable to Air Wardens, Boy Scouts, Sailors, Sportsmen. Ideal for fights, ball games, races, outdoor events. However, hurry! There's no telling how long we can continue to supply this precision-built 10-POWER Telescope at this amazingly low price. Once our present limited supply is gone, we cannot repeat this offer again.

CLIP COUPON BELOW and MAIL TODAY!

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Only
98¢

FREE!



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**MEASURES
FULL
16 INCHES
IN LENGTH**

**BRINGS
OBJECTS
10 TIMES
CLOSER**

Mail This **NO-RISK COUPON Today!**

**ILLINOIS MERCHANDISE MART, DEPT. 368
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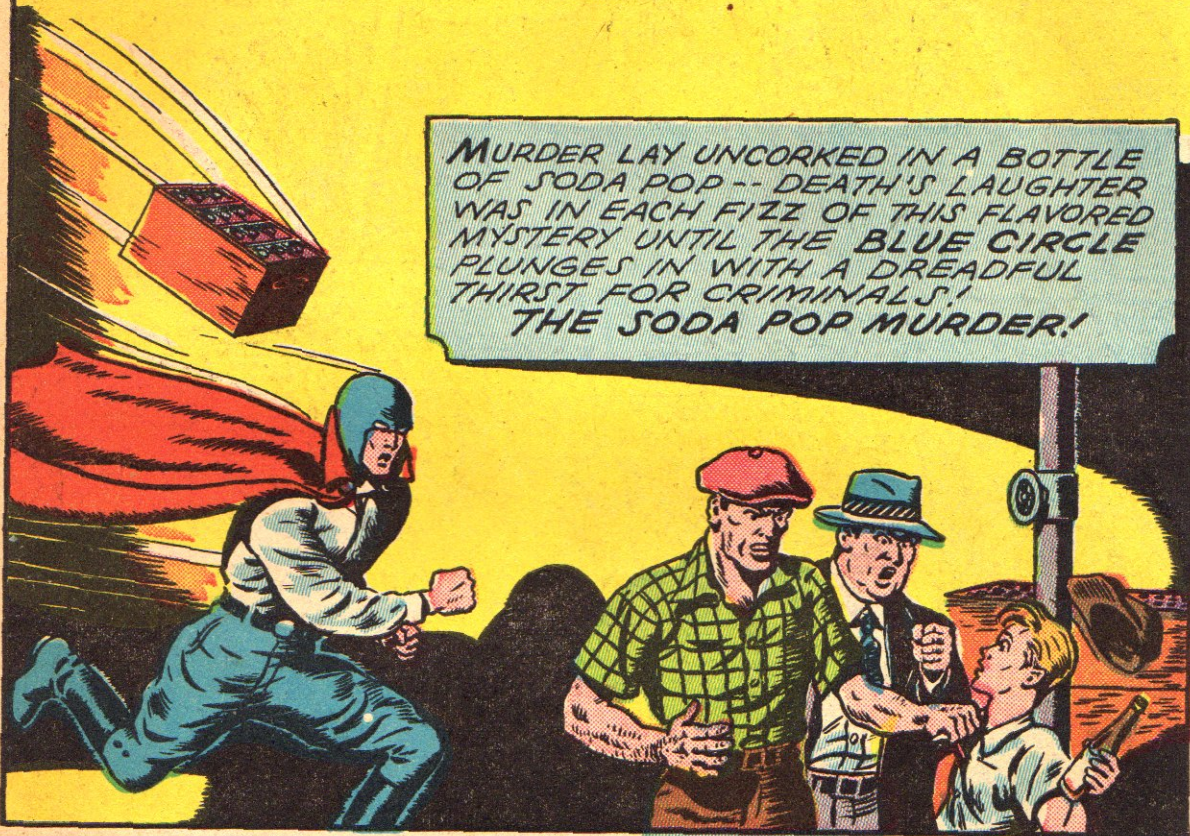
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Address **NARESTAR** _____
City _____
State _____

☐ I enclose \$1.79 plus 10c for the packing and postage. Please send me two 10-Power telescopes all prepaid on your money back guarantee.

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BLUE CIRCLE

MURDER LAY UNCORKED IN A BOTTLE OF SODA POP -- DEATH'S LAUGHTER WAS IN EACH FIZZ OF THIS FLAVORED MYSTERY UNTIL THE BLUE CIRCLE PLUNGES IN WITH A DREADFUL THIRST FOR CRIMINALS! THE SODA POP MURDER!



ONE STEAMING SUMMER DAY, LEN STAFFORD ENTERS A SODA FOUNTAIN HOPING TO COOL OFF--

HERE'S YOUR KOOLEROO, KID!

CHOCOLATE SODA, PLEASE!

THANKS!



PHETTT YUGH!

HEY-- WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?



THIS AIN'T KOOLEROO!
I WANT MY NICKEL
BACK-- THIS STUFF
TASTES AWFUL!

YOU YOUNG SCAMP,
OUTSIDE!! I DONT
WANT ANY LITTLE
CHISELERS RAINING
A ROW IN MY
STORE!

OWW!
LEGGO!
YOU BIG
CHEAT!!

BEN INTERFERES--
WAIT A MINUTE, MISTER--
MAYBE THE KID HAS
A RIGHT TO COMPLAIN!

LISTEN--I
KNOW THESE
KIDS...

OKAY, I'LL HANDLE THIS MY OWN
WAY THEN! HERE'S A NICKEL,
SONNY! DOES THAT MAKE YOU
EVEN?

GEE, THANKS!!
I'LL GET A GOOD
DRINK AT THE
PLACE DOWN
THE STREET!

THAT KOOLEROO
REALLY WAS
AWFUL!! I
WASN'T PULLIN'
ANY GAGS!

OKAY.. I'LL
SEE ABOUT
IT!

SUDDENLY--

WHAT IN --
MORE
TROUBLE?

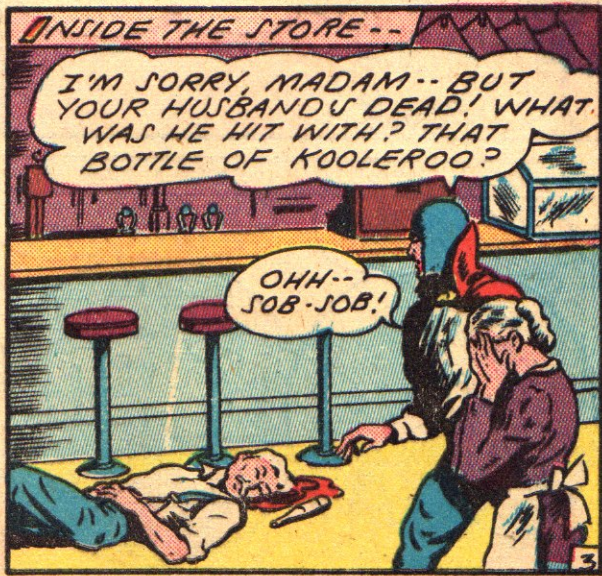
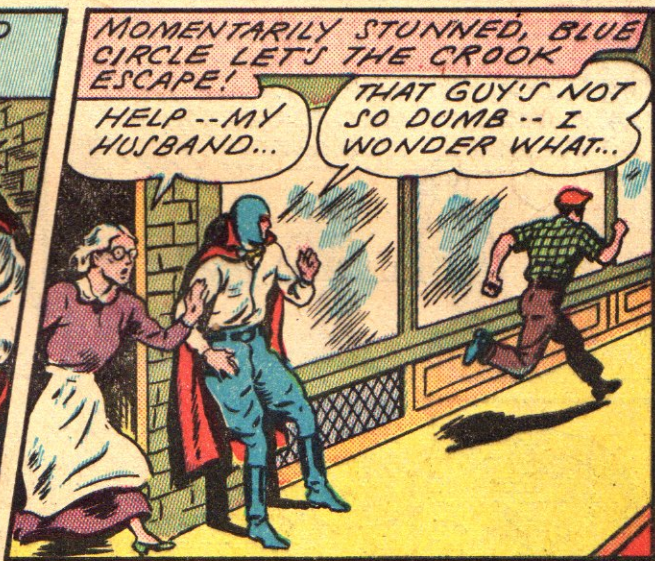
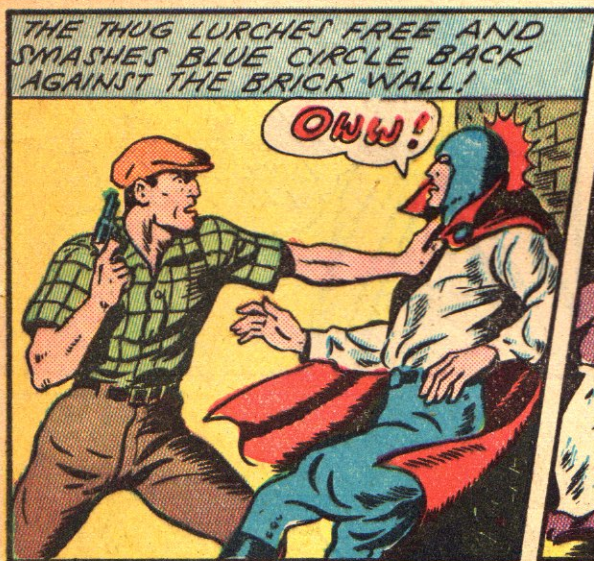
YIEEE!!

POP'S
SODA
FOUNTAIN

**BEN STAFFORD SUDDENLY BECOMES
THE --**

**BLUE
CIRCLE!!
GOSH!**

THAT SCREAM
SOUNDED LIKE
SOMEONE BEING
MURDERED!



**THE BLUE CIRCLE
QUESTIONS THE WO-
MAN WHILE THEY WAIT
FOR THE POLICE --**

NO, I DON'T HAVE
ANY IDEA WHY
JOHN WAS KILLED! HE
NEVER HURT.. OH, HERE
ARE THE POLICE!

I MUST LEAVE
YOU NOW-- BUT
I'LL DO WHAT I
CAN!



**WITHIN A HALF-
HOUR, SEVEN OF
THE MOST HARD-
ENED EX CRIMINALS
ANSWER THE CALL
OF THE
BLUE CIRCLE...**



**THEIR COUNCIL LEADER RELATES
HIS EXPERIENCES OF THAT MORNING.
SO, YOU ALL AGREE WITH ME THAT
THIS MURDER HAS SOMETHING
TO DO WITH KOOLEROO!**



AY!

AY!



THANKS, BOYS-- THAT'S
ALL FOR NOW! I JUST
WANTED TO BE SURE
I WASN'T OFF THE
BEAM ON A
DEDUCTION
LIKE THAT!

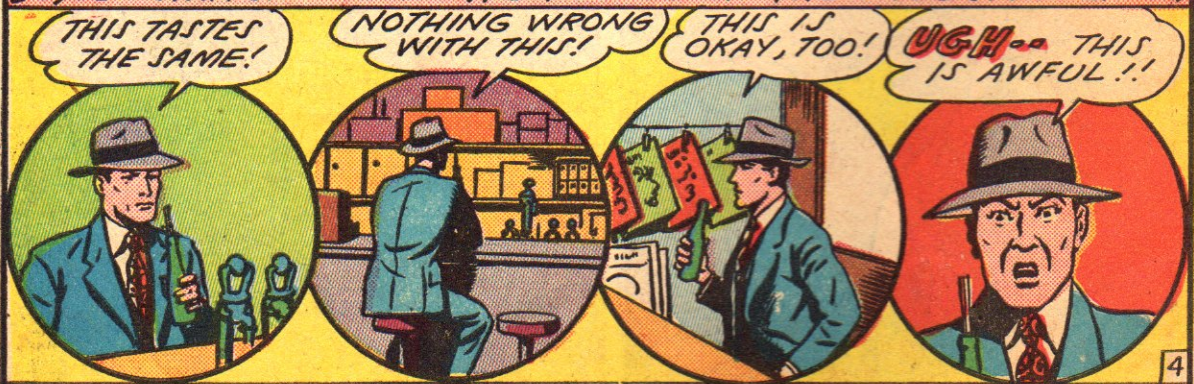


HMM-- WELL, IF SODA
POP AND MURDER ARE
THE MIXTURE, MAYBE
I'D BETTER GET
A CASE OF
KOOLEROO!



NOT BAD TASTING STUFF, AT
ALL! BUT, STILL NO CLUES!
HMM, MAYBE I'D
BETTER TRY THE
FOUNTAIN
VARIETY...

SO, LEN STAFFORD MAKES THE ROUNDS OF THE DRUG STORE BARS...



THIS TASTES
THE SAME!

NOTHING WRONG
WITH THIS!

THIS IS
OKAY, TOO!

**UGH-- THIS
IS AWFUL !!**

HEY, WHERE DID YOU GET THIS AWFUL STUFF?

HUH-- FROM THE KOOLEROO COMPANY, OF COURSE-- HOW DID YOU THINK?



THAT'S A LIE -- THAT BOTTLE ISN'T KOOLEROO! C'MON, LET'S HAVE THE TRUTH!

OKAY-- I'LL TELL YA! A FELLER CAME IN HERE AND MADE ME BUY IT!



HE SAID HE'D WRECK MY STORE IF I DIDN'T! MY GOSH, HERE HE IS AGAIN! PLEASE -- DON'T MAKE ANY TROUBLE!

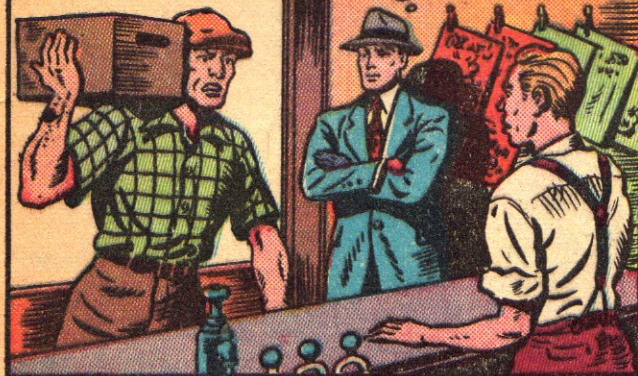
DON'T WORRY, I WON'T!



YOU'RE GETTIN' TEN CASES THIS WEEK, JENSEN!

BUT--- OH, YEAH! SURE!

THAT GUY LOOKS FAMILIAR!



HOWEVER, LEN FOLLOWS THE FELLOW OUT OF THE STORE!

IT IS THE SAME FELLOW WHO KILLED POP! I'M GONNA HITCH A RIDE WITH THAT MUG!

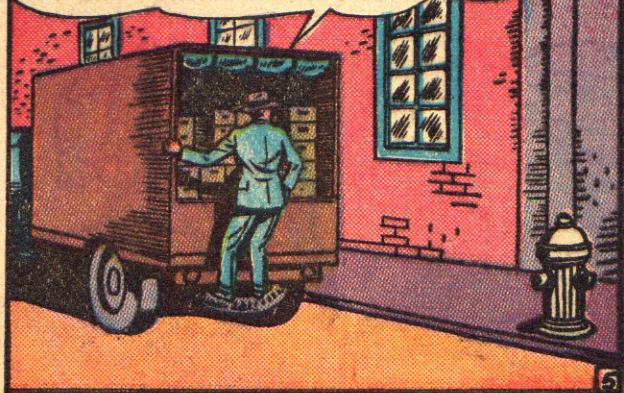


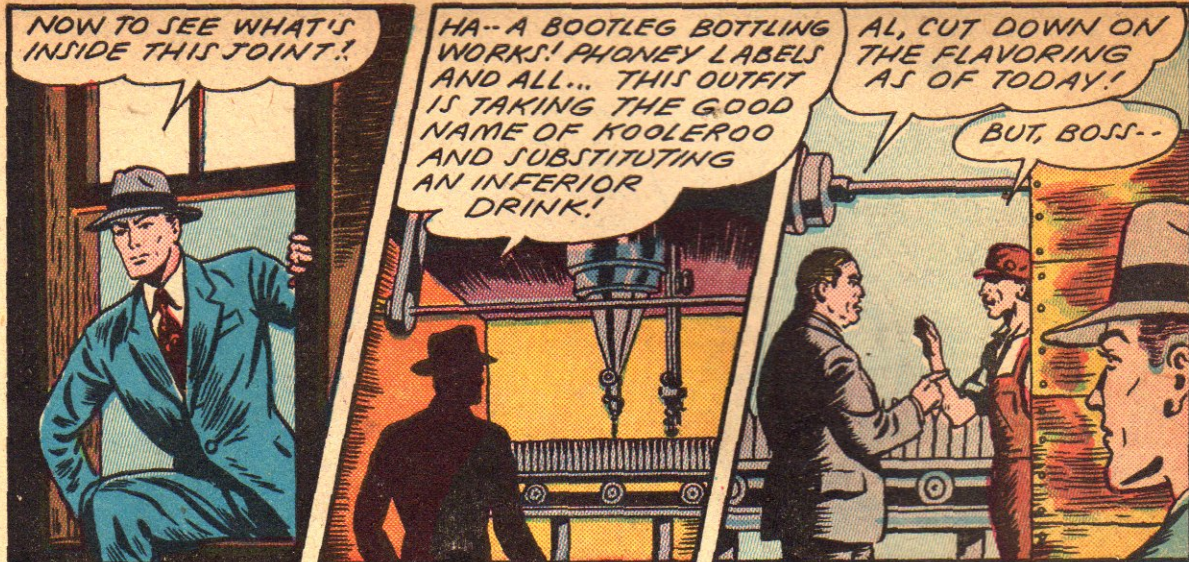
HE CERTAINLY HAS PLENTY OF NERVE-- I SHOULD THINK HE'D BE LYING LOW WITH A MURDER FRESH ON HIS HANDS!



TWENTY MINUTES LATER ...

HMM-- HE'S STOPPING HERE! LOOKS LIKE A BOTTLING PLANT! I'M BEGINNING TO SMELL A BUNCH OF RATS!!



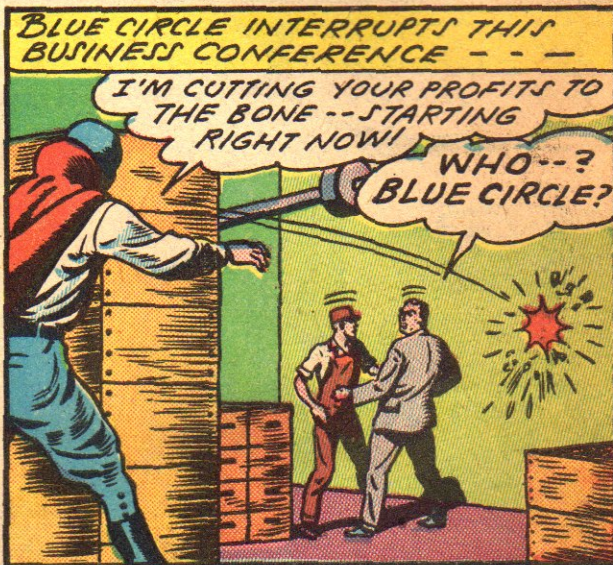


AL, CUT DOWN ON THE FLAVORING AS OF TODAY!

BUT, BOSS--



...IF WE CUT ANY MORE, THE PEOPLE WON'T BUY THE STUFF AT ALL!



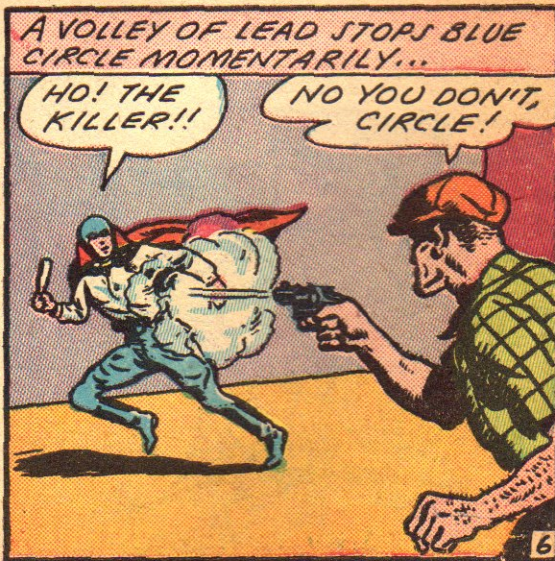
BLUE CIRCLE INTERRUPTS THIS BUSINESS CONFERENCE - - -

I'M CUTTING YOUR PROFITS TO THE BONE -- STARTING RIGHT NOW!

WHO--? BLUE CIRCLE?



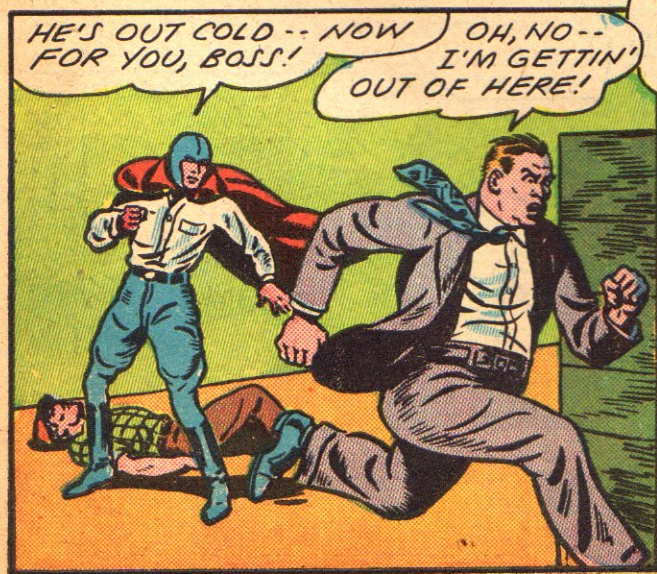
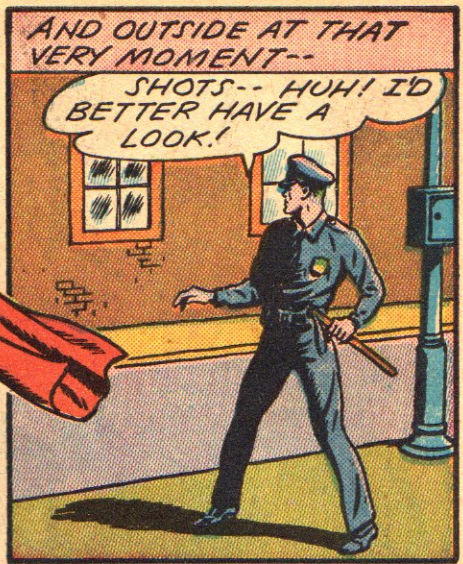
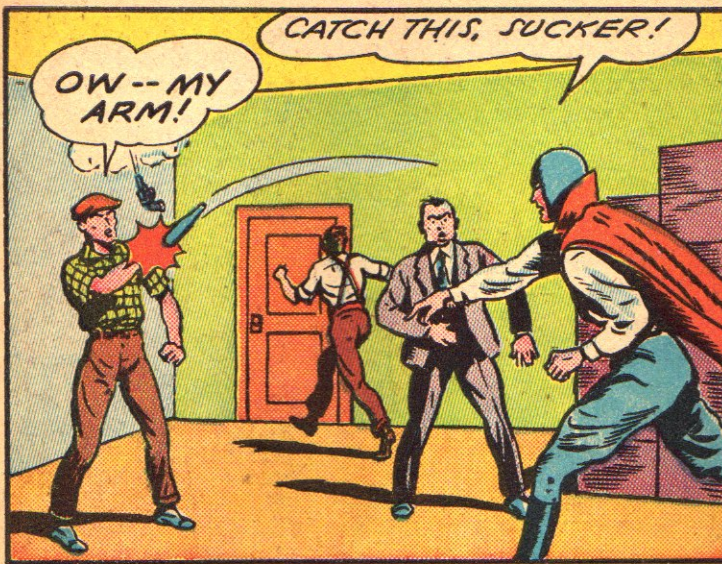
I'M JUST ANOTHER OF YOUR DISSATISFIED CUSTOMERS-- BUT I INTEND TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!

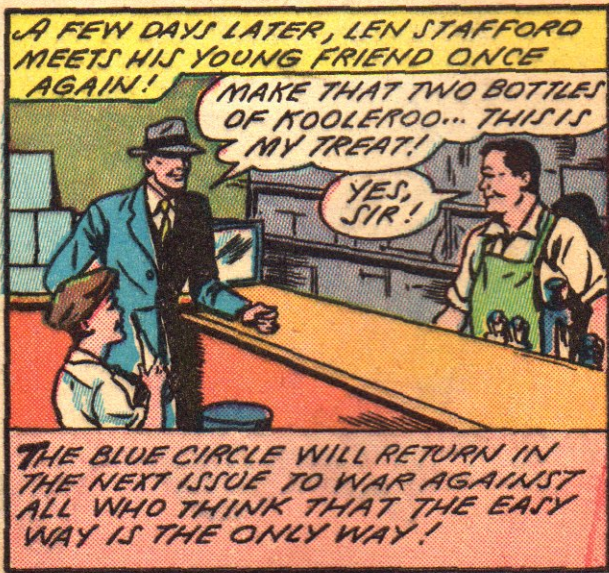


A VOLLEY OF LEAD STOPS BLUE CIRCLE MOMENTARILY...

HO! THE KILLER!!

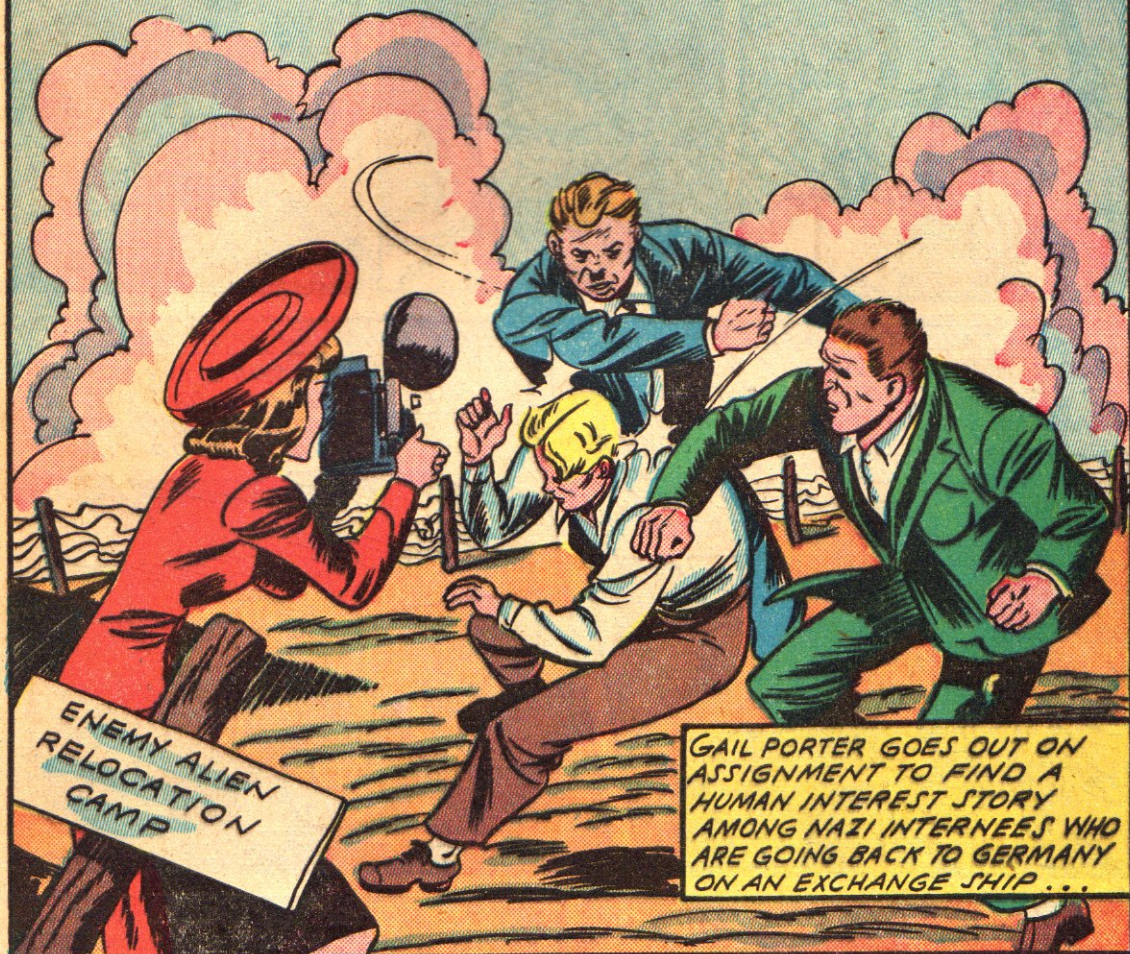
NO YOU DON'T, CIRCLE!





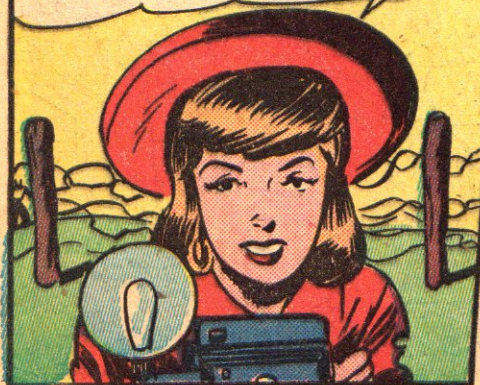
Gail Porter

GIRL PHOTOGRAPHER



GAIL PORTER GOES OUT ON ASSIGNMENT TO FIND A HUMAN INTEREST STORY AMONG NAZI INTERNEES WHO ARE GOING BACK TO GERMANY ON AN EXCHANGE SHIP...

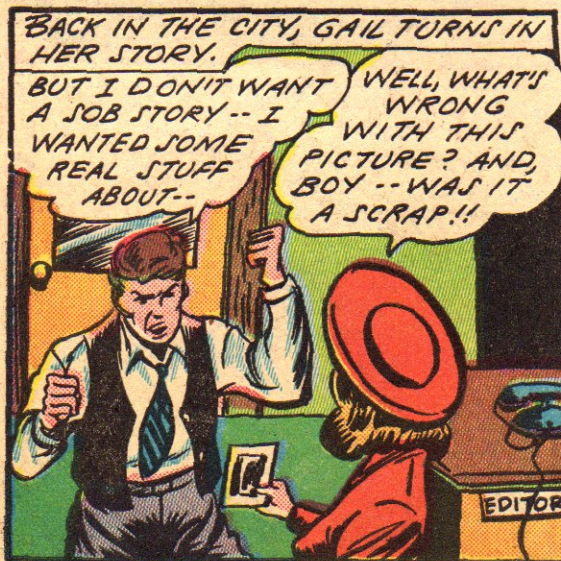
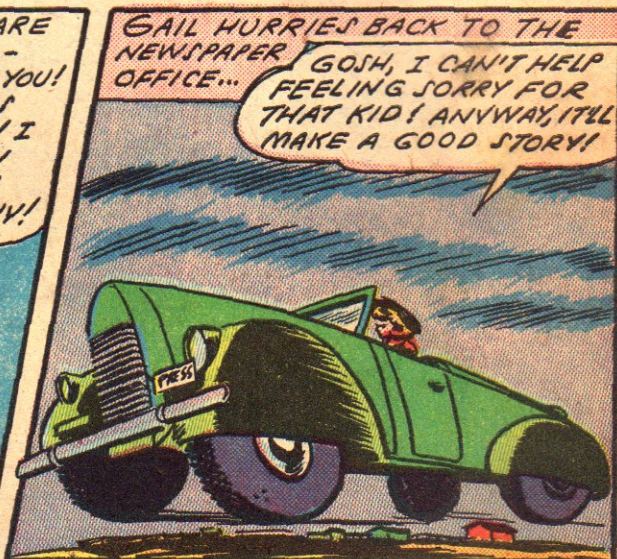
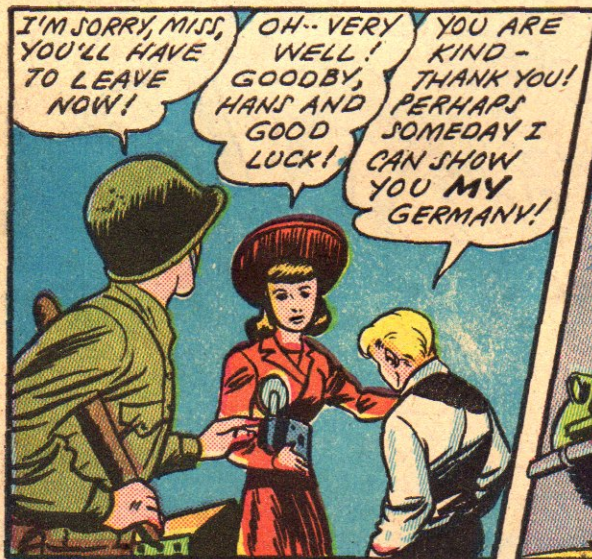
GOT IT -- BOY, THOSE NAZIS CERTAINLY CAN FIGHT! WONDER WHAT'S UP, THOUGH?



C'MON, YOU-- GET BACK INTO THE BARRACKS! NO FIGHTING!



HELLO -- ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? WHY WERE THEY PICKING ON YOU?



GAIL INVESTIGATES WHAT SEEMS TO BE A ROUTINE MATTER.

NOT MUCH ON THAT MISSING MAN, MAX STURM! HERE'S A BATCH OF SNAPSHOTS HIS LANDLADY HAD, BUT HE'S NOT TO BE FOUND IN OUR MORGUE!



OKAY!

OH, BLAST THAT PHONE--

TUT, CHIEF! THAT MAY BE A FRONT PAGE STORY!



WHAT.. IT WAS? OH, THANKS!

SHALL I GET MY HAT?



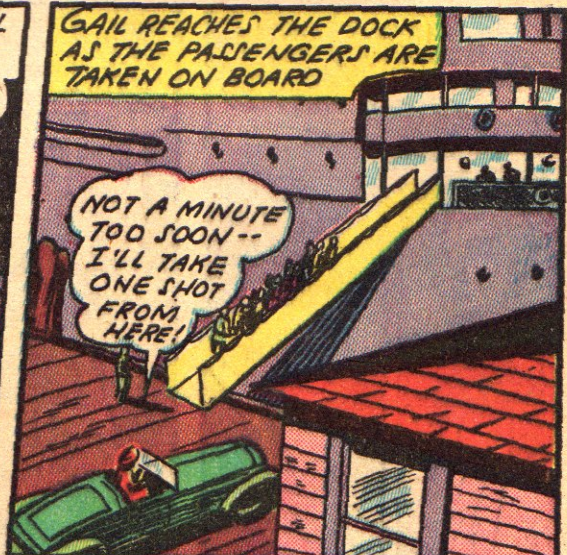
YES.. THEY'VE SHOVED UP THE SAILING DATE ON THAT EXCHANGE SHIP! IT'S GOING OUT THIS AFTERNOON!

OKAY--I'LL GET RIGHT DOWN THERE!

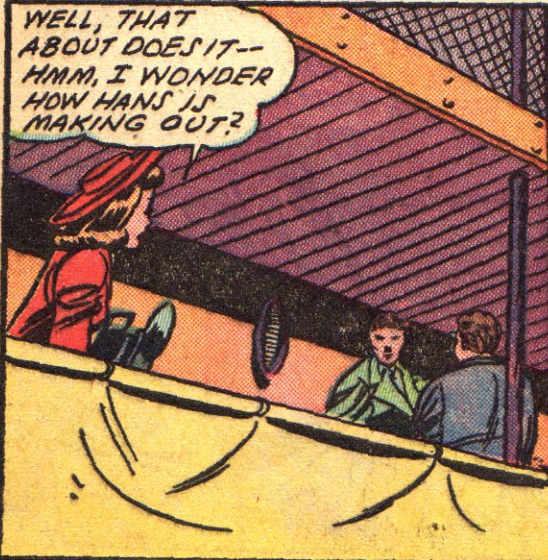


GAIL REACHES THE DOCK AS THE PASSENGERS ARE TAKEN ON BOARD

NOT A MINUTE TOO SOON-- I'LL TAKE ONE SHOT FROM HERE!



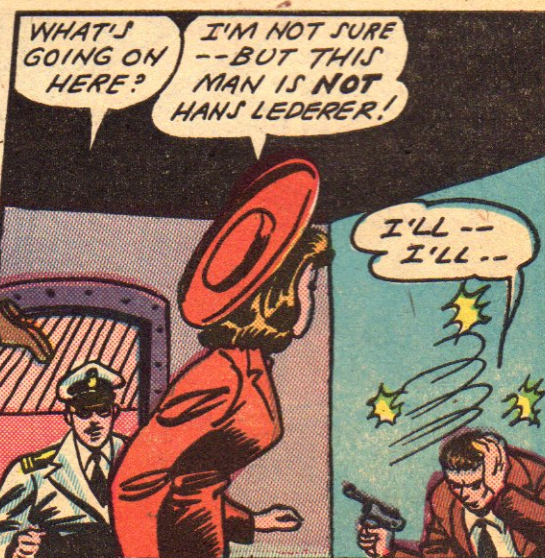
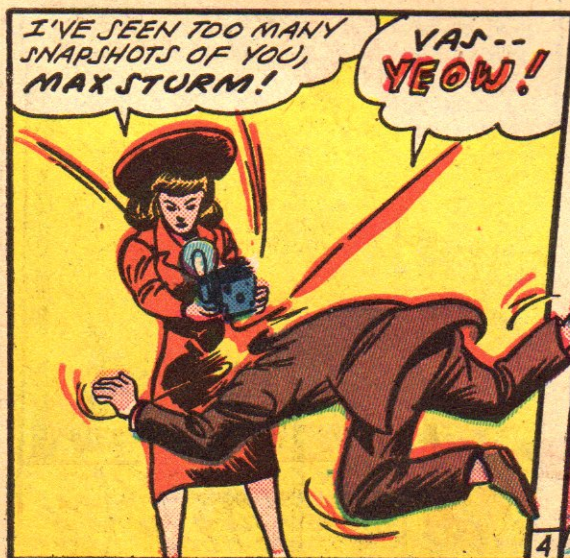
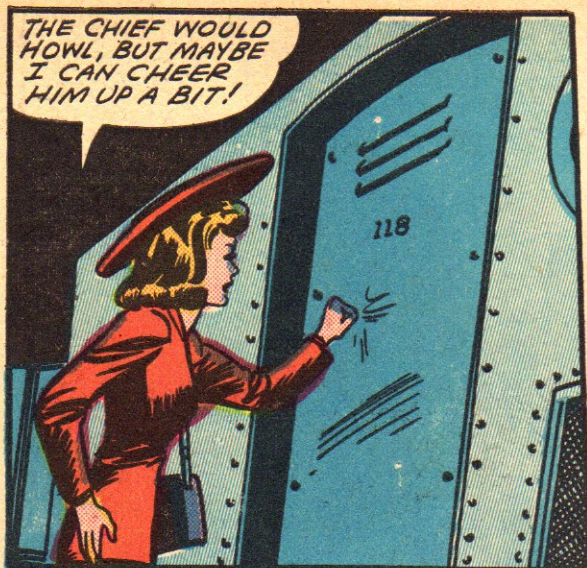
WELL, THAT ABOUT DOES IT--
HMM, I WONDER HOW HANS IS MAKING OUT?



ER, OFFICER! DO YOU SUPPOSE I COULD SEE HANS LEDERER, ONE OF THE PRISONERS?

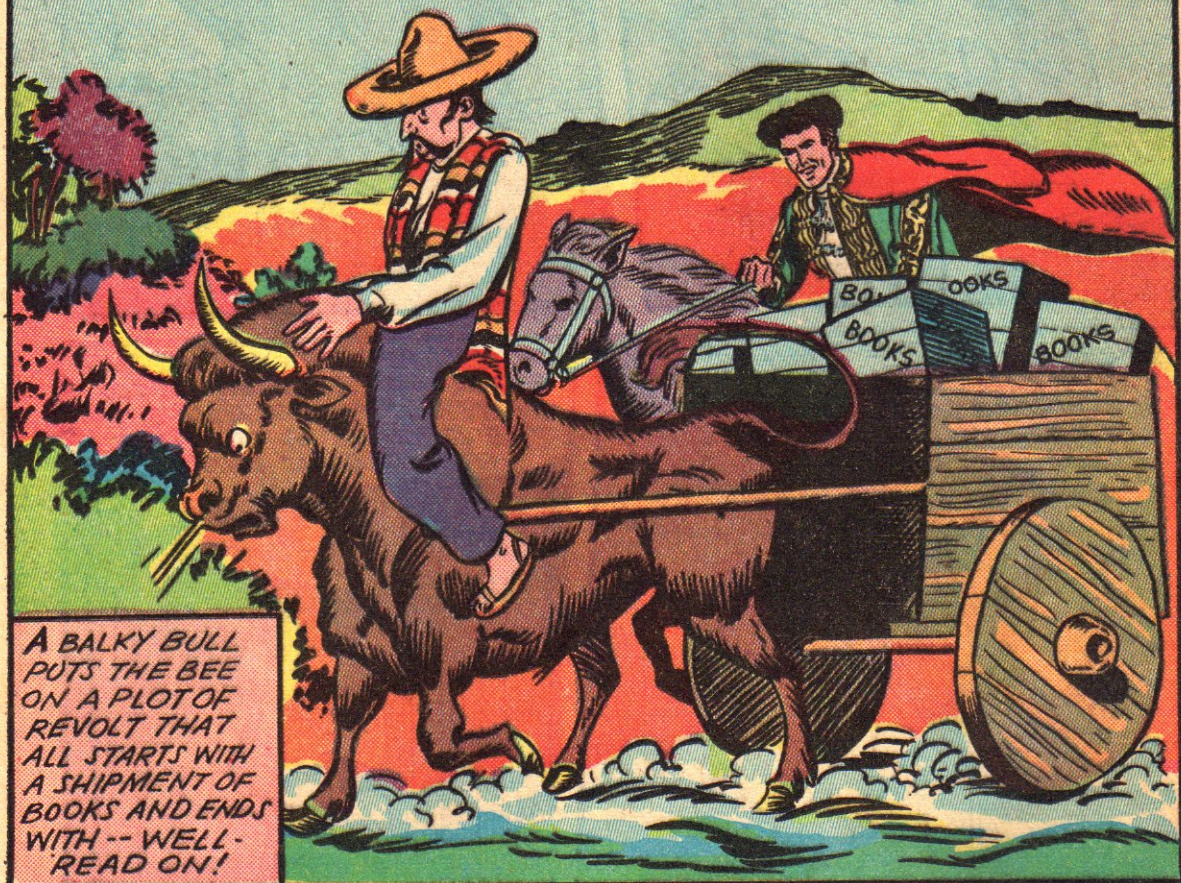
LEDERER? WHY, SURE! HE'S IN STATEROOM 11P!





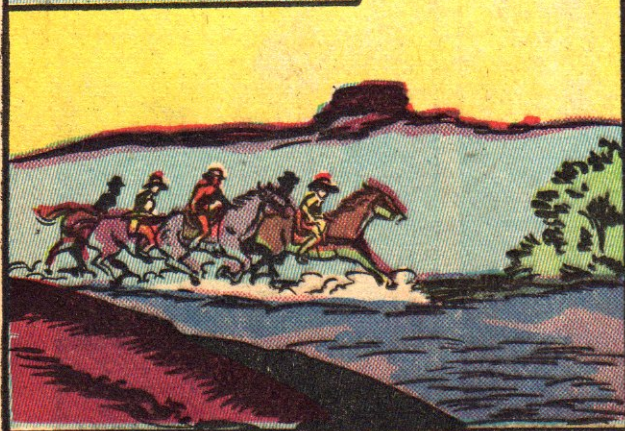


Toreador



A BALKY BULL PUTS THE BEE ON A PLOT OF REVOLT THAT ALL STARTS WITH A SHIPMENT OF BOOKS AND ENDS WITH -- WELL -- READ ON!

THE THUNDER OF ROUGH-SHOD HOOVES BEATS A STACCATO OF DANGER AS A RENEGADE BAND APPROACHES PAT KING'S RANCH!



THE LEADER SPURS HIS MEN FORWARD...

HURRY, AMIGOS... WE WEEL HAVE ACTION THEES DAY!

AGAAH! AYEEE!



MEANWHILE AT THE KING RANCH,
TOREADOR IS RELAXING WHEN ...

ANOTHER CUP OF
COFFEE, TOREADOR?

YES, PAT!... SAY,
WAIT---



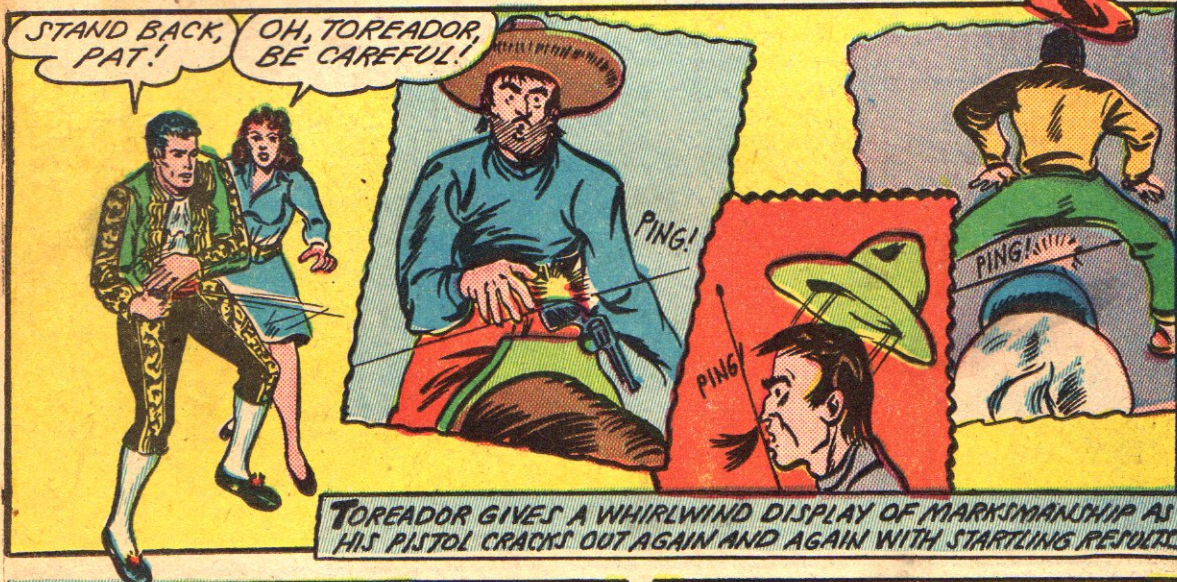
HOLA!
BANDITS!!

BANG! BANG!
BANG!



STAND BACK,
PAT!

OH, TOREADOR,
BE CAREFUL!



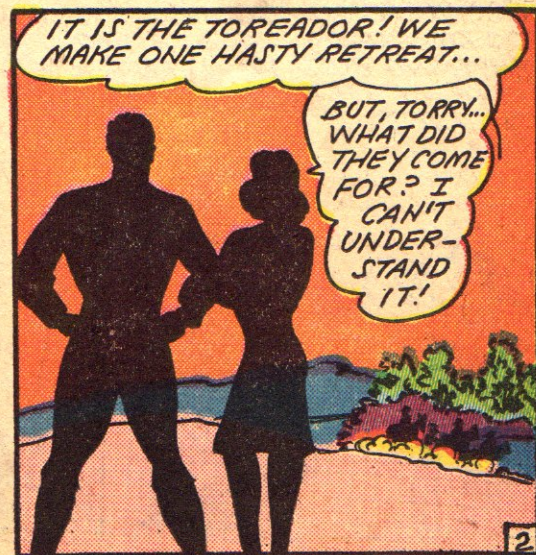
TOREADOR GIVES A WHIRLWIND DISPLAY OF MARKSMANSHIP AS
HIS PISTOL CRACKS OUT AGAIN AND AGAIN WITH STARTLING RESULTS

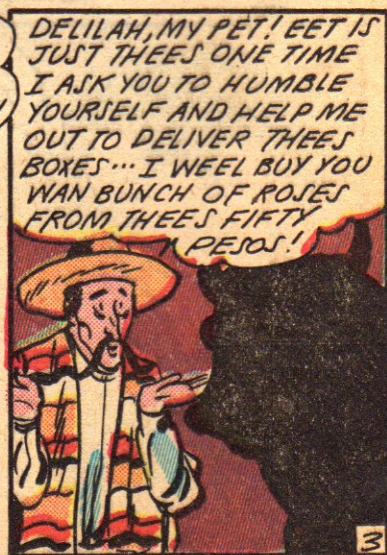
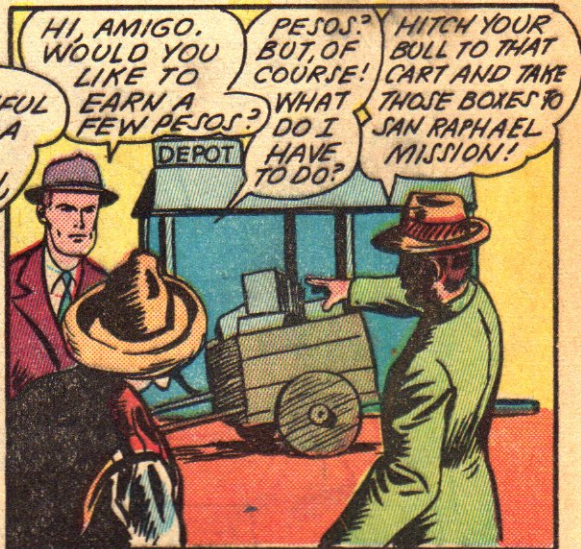
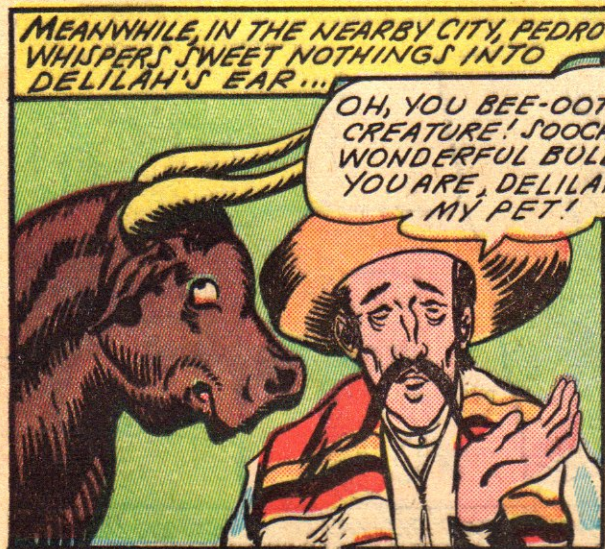
THAT OUGHT
TO TAKE CARE
OF THEM!



IT IS THE TOREADOR! WE
MAKE ONE HASTY RETREAT...

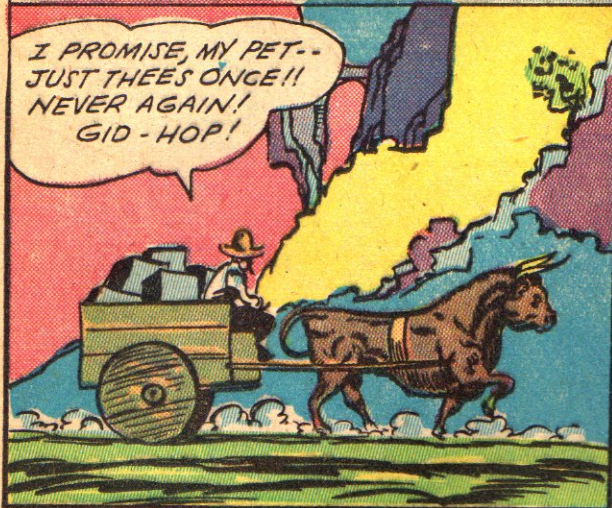
BUT, TORRY...
WHAT DID
THEY COME
FOR? I
CAN'T
UNDER-
STAND
IT!





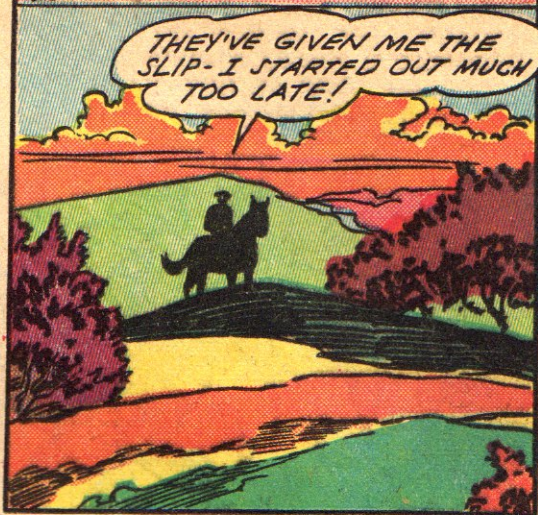
WITHOUT FURTHER PERSUASION DELILAH
SUBMITS TO HIS IGNOBLE TASK ---

I PROMISE, MY PET--
JUST THEES ONCE!!
NEVER AGAIN!
GID - HOP!

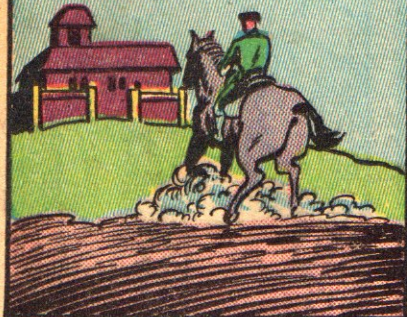


MEANWHILE TOREADOR HUNTS
ELUSIVE PREY---

THEY'VE GIVEN ME THE
SLIP- I STARTED OUT MUCH
TOO LATE!



OH, WELL, I'LL PAY
FATHER FRANCISCO A
VISIT WHILE I WATER
MY HORSE AT THE
MISSION WELL!



HELLO! WHERE'S FATHER
THE GOOD PADRE FRANCISCO?
HAS JOURNEYED TO MEXICO
CITY. I, FATHER GERARD,
HAVE BEEN LEFT
IN HIS PLACE!



THAT'S FUNNY!
I SAW FATHER
FRANCISCO ONLY
THE OTHER MORNING,
AND HE MADE NO
MENTION OF A
JOURNEY!

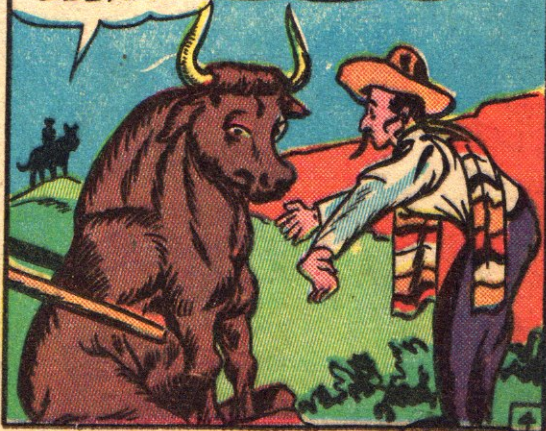


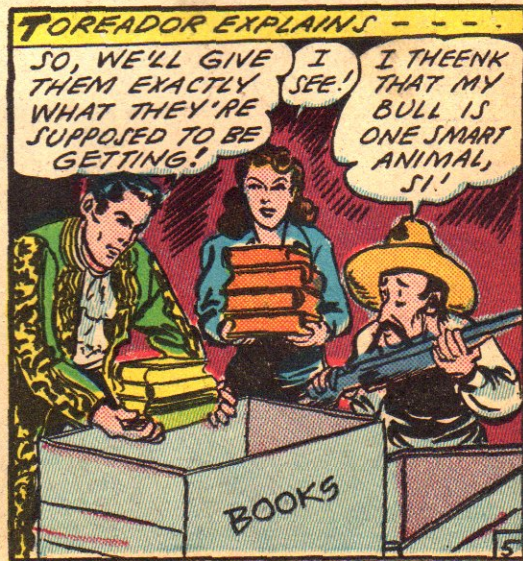
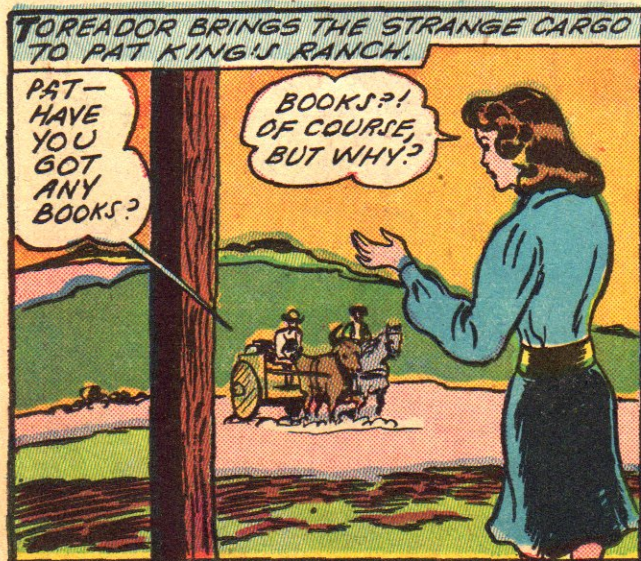
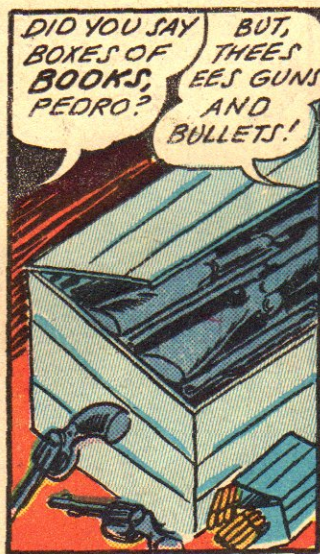
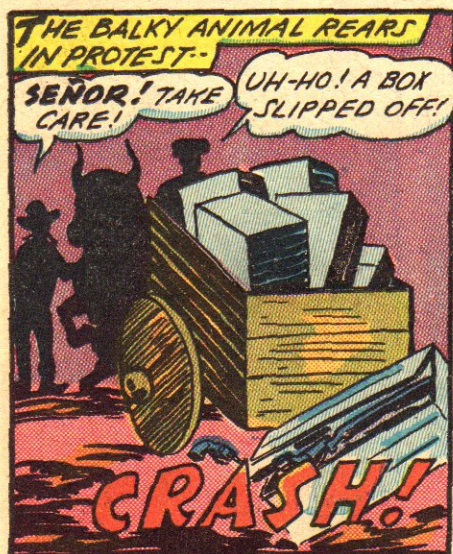
ADIOS, PADRE!
WE WILL MEET
AGAIN SOON!

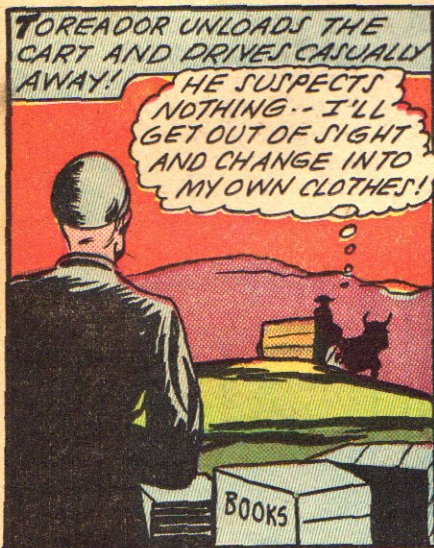
A PLEASANT
JOURNEY,
MY SON!



BY THE MOST HOLY---IF IT
ISN'T PEDRO AND ---HAH!
HE'S HAVING TROUBLE WITH
DELILAH!







TOREADOR RETURNS TO THE MISSION BUILDING.

**PADRE --
PADRE
FRANCISCO!**

**HE IS ANSWERED BY A LOW
MOAN...**

OH HHHH!

**PADRE -- HAVE THEY
HURT YOU? HERE,
I'LL HAVE YOU
UNTIED IN A
MOMENT!**

**CAN YOU TELL ME
WHAT'S GOING ON?**

**THOSE MEN ARE NAZIS--
INTENT ON STIRRING UP
A FIGHT BETWEEN
THE PEONS AND
RANCH OWNERS SO
THEY CAN STEP IN
WITH THEIR OWN
AGENTS!**

**I WAS AFRAID OF THAT!
YOU GET TO THE ARMY
BASE AND BRING HELP
TO THE
KING
RANCH!**

**I WILL GO
AT ONCE!**

**OH, GOSH-- I FORGOT ALL
ABOUT PEDRO'S BULL! WELL,
NO TIME TO WORRY ABOUT
THAT NOW! I'VE GOT TO
BEAT THEM TO THE
RANCH!**

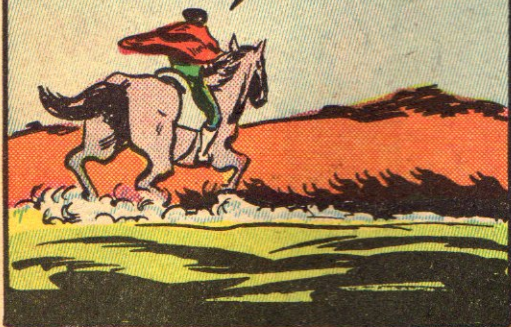
BUT--

**TOO LATE! THEY'VE GOT
THE RANCH SURROUNDED!
AND, PAT AND PEDRO
ARE TRAPPED
INSIDE!**



TOREADOR PLANS SWIFTLY --

I'LL STAMPEDE
THE HERD INTO
THE CLEARING!
HIYAAA!! HIYAAA!
HIYAAA!! HIYAAA!



**-- AND SUCCEEDS IN STAMPEDING THE
CATTLE TOWARD THE RANCH HOUSE!**

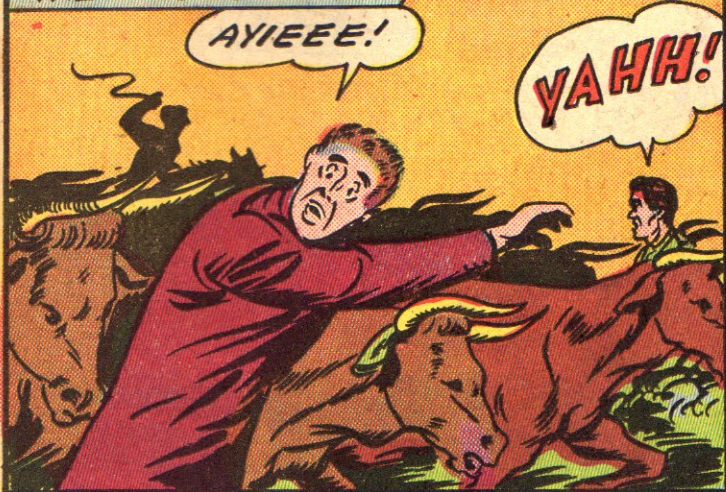
THOSE NAZIS SEE US
NOW -- WATCH
THEM RUN!



**TERRIFIED, THE NAZIS SEEK ESCAPE FROM
THE SURGING HERD!**

AYIEEE!

YAHH!



TOREADOR-- I'M SO GLAD TO
SEE YOU & WE
WERE TRAPPED!

I KNOW--
I'M SORRY
I DIDN'T
GET HERE
SOONER!



SANTE!
LOOK!

GOOD
HEAVENS?!

?



DELILAH, SHE
BREINGS THE
ARMY!

HA! HA!
THIS IS THE FIRST
TIME A BULL EVER
LED A CAVALRY
CHARGE!



I HAVE EXPLAINED
EVERYTHING TO THE
CAPTAIN!

WE'LL TAKE
THE PRISONERS
IN WITH US FOR
TRIAL!

PEDRO IS
HAPPY-- HIS
BULL REALLY
GETS THE
CREDIT
FOR THIS!



THE END.

MAUREEN MARINE



DAVEY JONES DAY IN ATLANTIS IS A HOLIDAY FOR THE UNDERSEA WORLD! AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT QUEEN MAUREEN AND FATHER NEPTUNE HOPED - UNTIL THEY SET OUT TO LOOK FOR THE GUEST OF HONOR, DAVEY JONES HIMSELF, AND FOUND -- ??

THE STREETS OF ATLANTIS ROCK WITH THE LAUGHTER OF CARNIVAL TIME...

IT STARTS IN QUEEN MAUREEN'S QUEENLY CHAMBERS...

QUEEN MAUREEN, COME LOOK HOW HAPPY YOUR PEOPLE ARE!

I'M SO GLAD, FATHER NEPTUNE!

GRACIOUS, THEY ARE HAPPY, AREN'T THEY?

THIS IS A VERY SPECIAL DAY FOR ALL UNDERWATER CREATURES -- WE PAY HOMAGE TO ONE OF OUR GREATEST MEN! YOU'LL LIKE HIM!

BUT, AFTER SEVERAL LONG HOURS OF WAITING...

QUEEN MAUREEN,
I WOULD SPEAK
WITH YOU...

YES, RAMPO
-- WHAT
NEWS DO
YOU
BRING?

OUR SCOUTS CAN
FIND NO SIGN
OF DAVEY
JONES!

OH! FATHER
NEPTUNE, DO YOU
SUPPOSE SOME
ILL HAS
BEFALLEN
HIM?

I DOUBT IT, MY CHILD!
THOUGH, HE WOULD
HARDLY FORGET
WHAT DAY THIS IS!
WE SHALL GO TO HIS
LOCKER TO FETCH
HIM!

I WILL
ORDER
YOUR
TURTLE
CHARIOT
TO BE
READY,
YOUR
MAJESTY!

MOMENTS LATER, AS THE GIANT
TURTLE SWIMS THROUGH THE
WATER...

WHERE IS DAVEY
JONES' LOCKER,
FATHER NEPTUNE?

HE LIVES
JUST
THE OTHER
SIDE OF
SEAWEED
STRAIGHT!

SUDDENLY!

FATHER
NEPTUNE!
LOOK!

HOLY HADDOCK!
IT IS PLINUS--
THE GIANT
SQUID!

OH HHH--
WHAT A DREAD-
FUL CREATURE!

THE TITANIC MUSCLES OF THE SQUID
EMBRACE THE RIDING TURTLE!

JUMP OFF,
MAUREEN!

OH! OUR
POOR
TURTLE!

HURRY --
HE WILL
BE AFTER
US NEXT!

RUN FOR THAT CAVE,
MAUREEN! HURRY!
THE SQUID IS
COMING
AFTER US!

WE WERE
FOOLISH NOT
TO BRING
WEAPONS!

MAUREEN STUMBLES- FALLS!

OH...
FATHER
NEPTUNE!

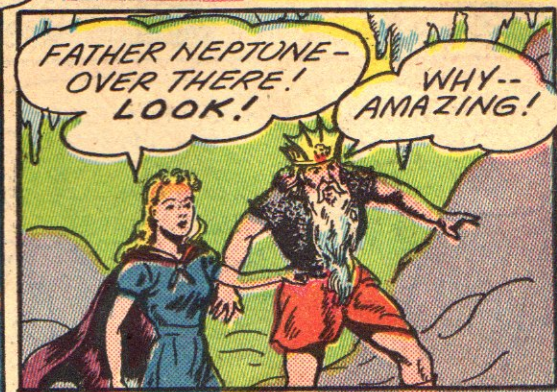
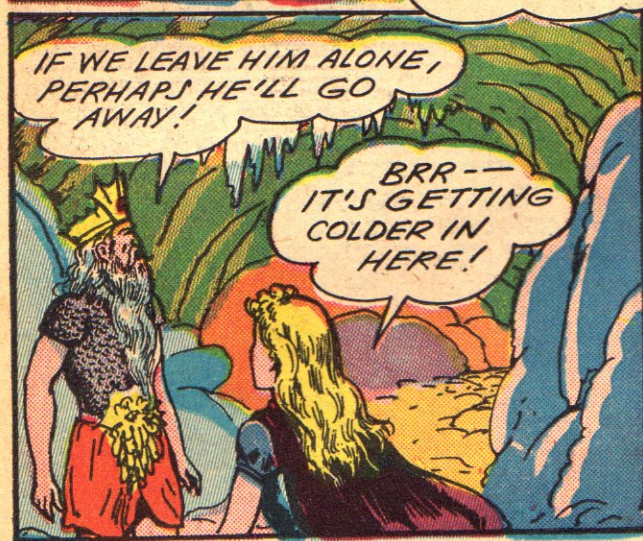
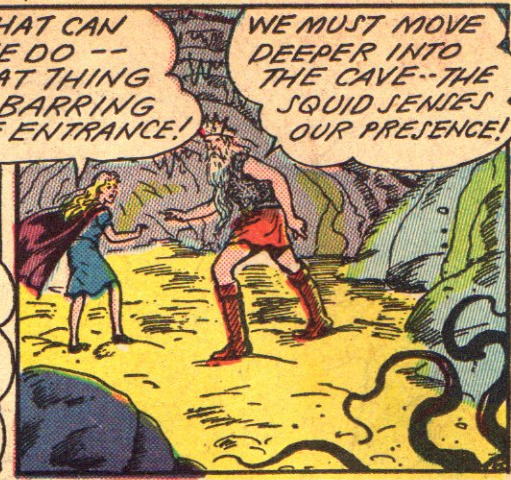
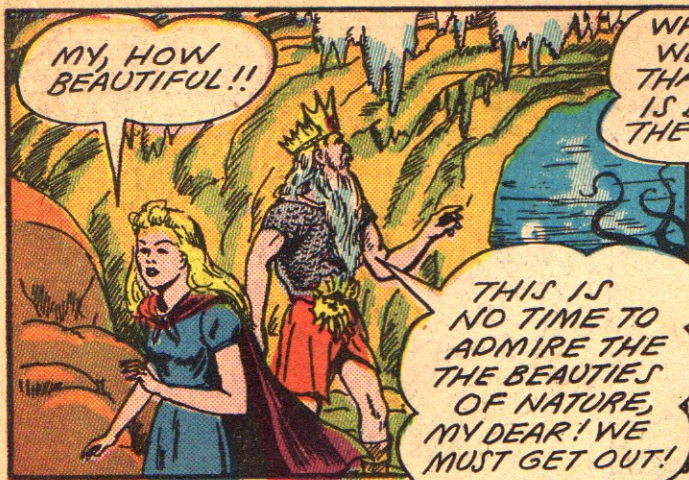
GREAT GULPS!
MAUREEN!
GIVE ME YOUR
HAND!!

IN YOU COME!

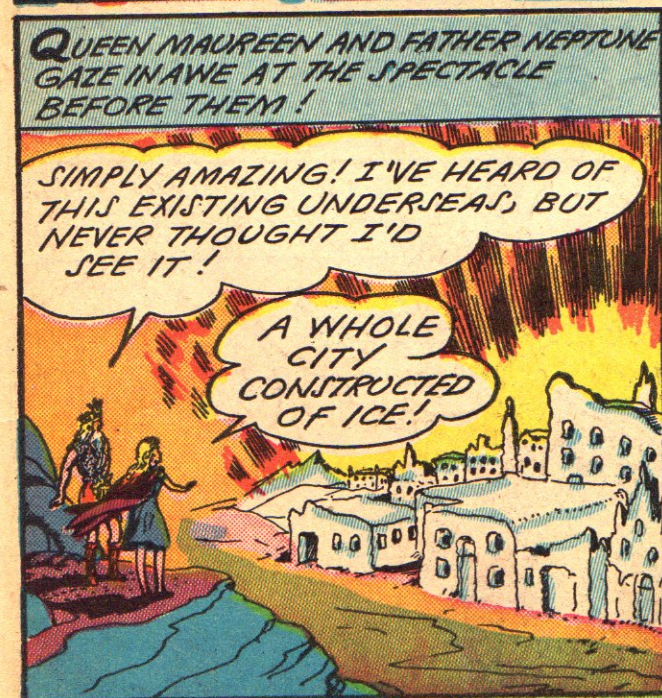
GRACIOUS--
THAT
TENTACLE
JUST
MISSED
ME!

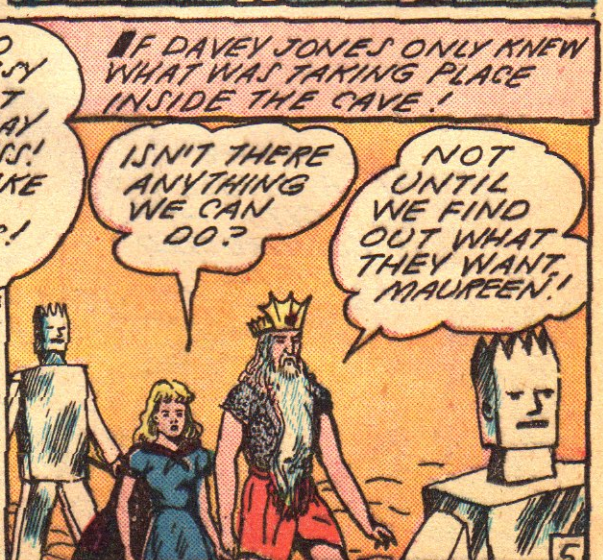
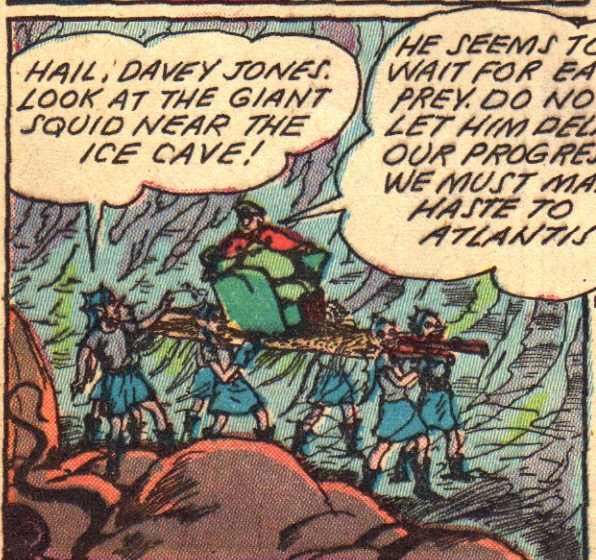
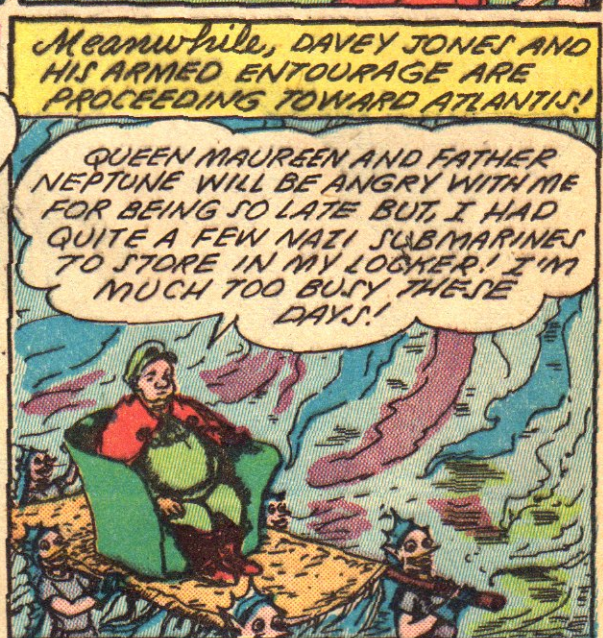
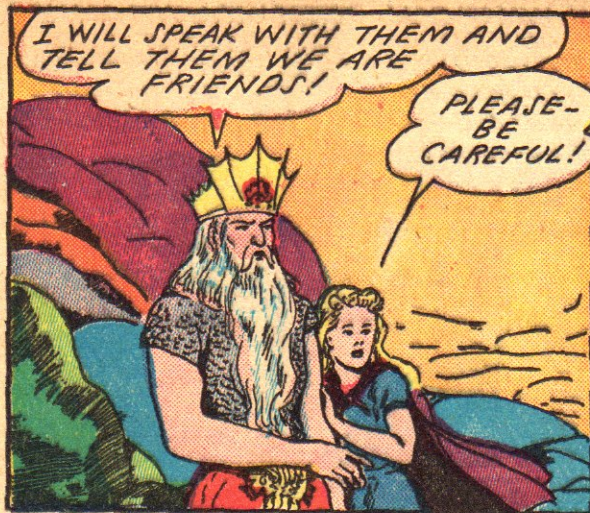
FATHER NEPTUNE...
WHAT WONDERLAND
IS THIS?

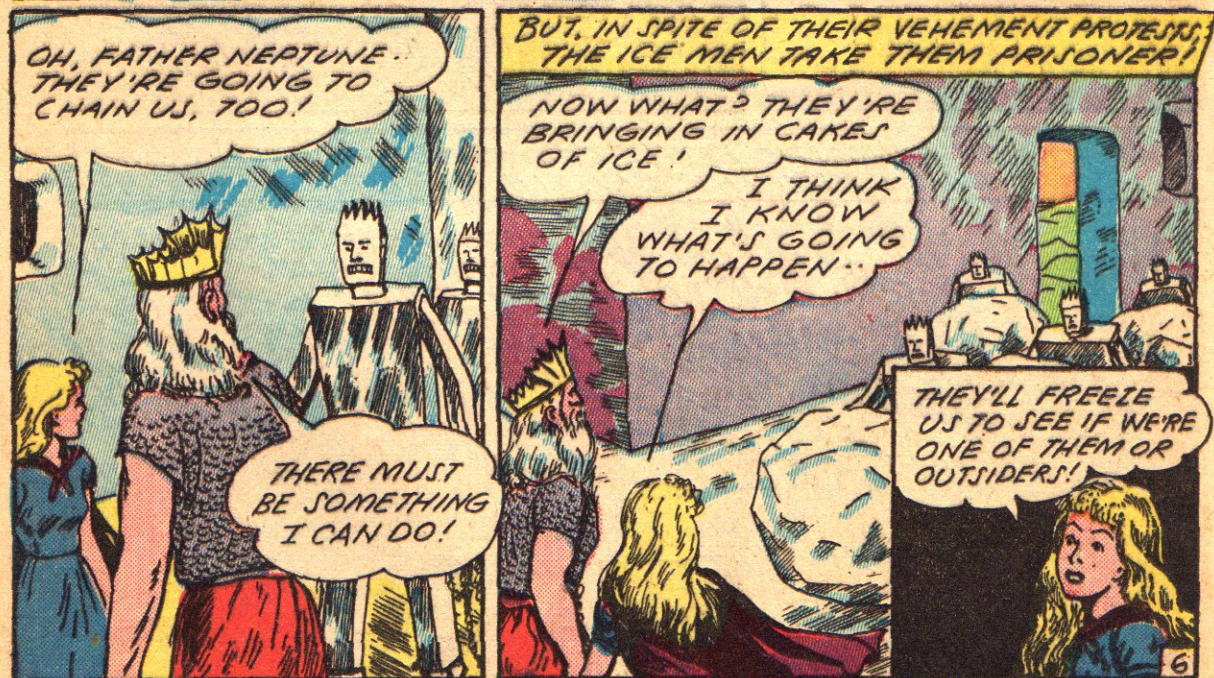
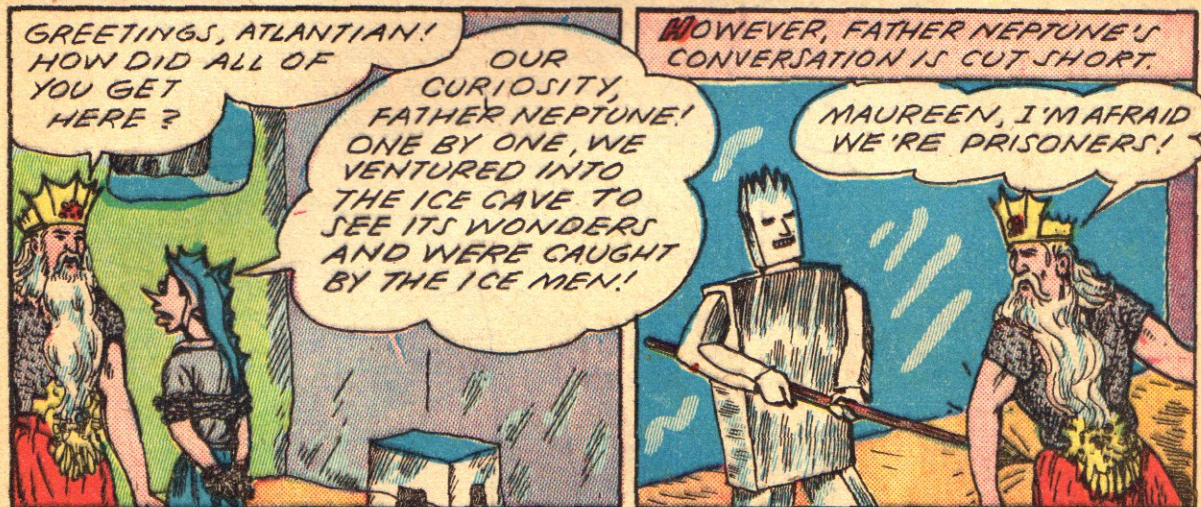
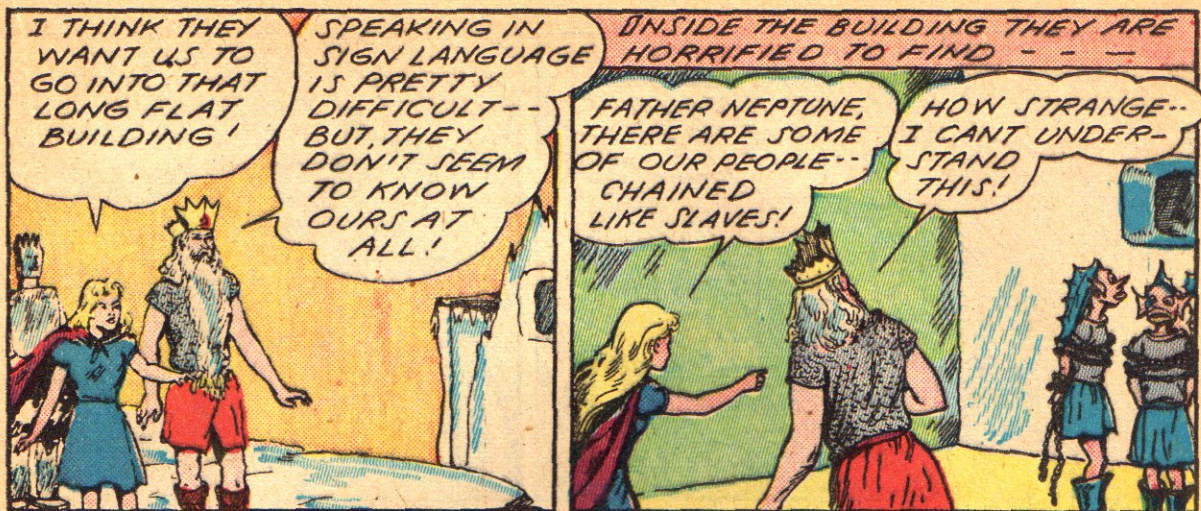
IT IS ONE OF THE
MANY ICE CAVES...
STRANGE LEGENDS
ARE TOLD ABOUT.
HIDDEN DANGERS
THAT LURK
IN THEM!

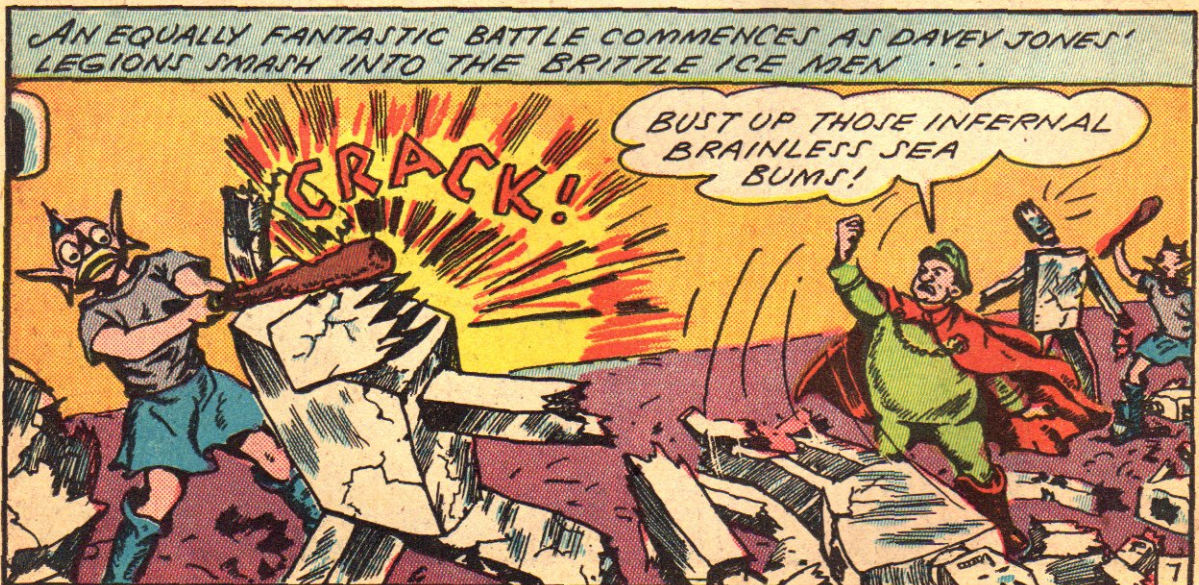
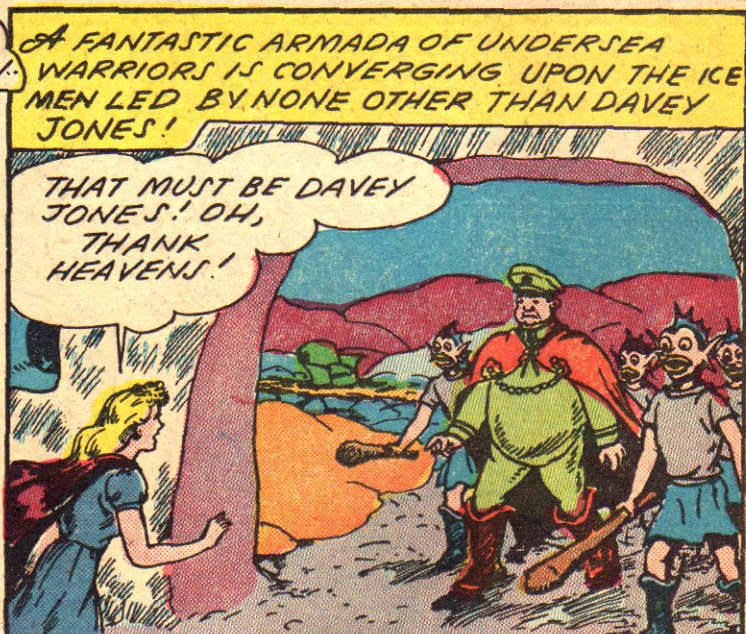
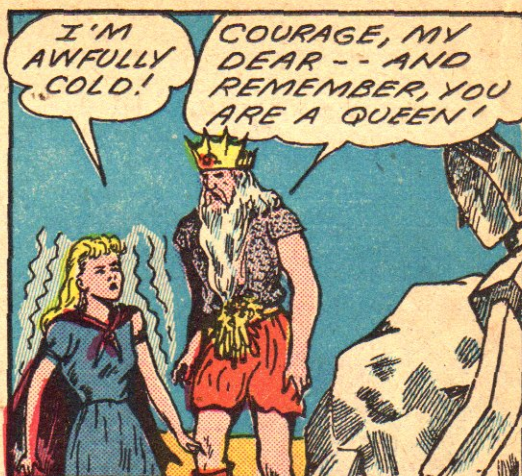
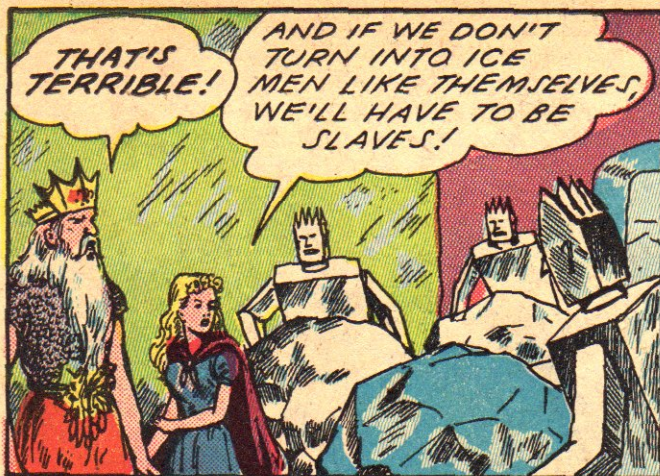


A SLIGHT NOISE BEHIND THEM, CAUSES THEM TO TURN AND...









IN SHORT MINUTES, THE ICE MEN BREAK UNDER THE HEAT OF BATTLE ---

HO -- THINGS ARE GETTING TOO HOT FOR THEM NOW!

CRACK!

WITH THE ENEMY COMPLETELY ROUTED, THE PRISONERS ARE FREED!

IN A SHORT TIME, MAUREEN AND FATHER NEPTUNE HAVE THAWED OUT COMPLETELY!

HURRY! TEAR DOWN THOSE WALLS OF ICE AROUND QUEEN MAUREEN AND FATHER NEPTUNE!

BUT, HOW DID YOU TWO GET CAUGHT? I'M SURPRISED AT YOU, NEPTUNE!

IT'S YOUR FAULT, JONES, FOR BEING LATE! WE WERE LOOKING FOR YOU!

WHAT PUZZLES ME IS, HOW DID YOU KNOW WE WERE HERE?

I PASSED THE SQUID AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE CAVE - THEN, WHEN I GOT TO ATLANTIS AND FOUND YOU HAD LEFT, I SUSPECTED TROUBLE AND CAME AT ONCE! THAT SQUID GAVE US A NICE FIGHT BEFORE WE COULD GET INTO THE CAVE AT ALL!

AS THEY RETURN TO ATLANTIS ---

PERHAPS IT IS JUST AS WELL YOU WERE LATE, DAVEY JONES! OTHERWISE, WE WOULD NEVER HAVE KNOWN OF OUR PEOPLE WHO WERE IMPRISONED BY THE ICE MEN!

THE ICE MEN ARE NATURAL KILLERS! IT IS WELL TO LEAVE THEM ALONE!

SAFELY AND HAPPILY RETURNED TO ATLANTIS, DAVEY JONES' DAY BECOMES A REAL CELEBRATION!

The END.

DRIFTWOOD Davey



WE MEET THE TWO ITINERANT FRIENDS
LEAVING A FARM AFTER DOING A BIT
OF HARVESTING.

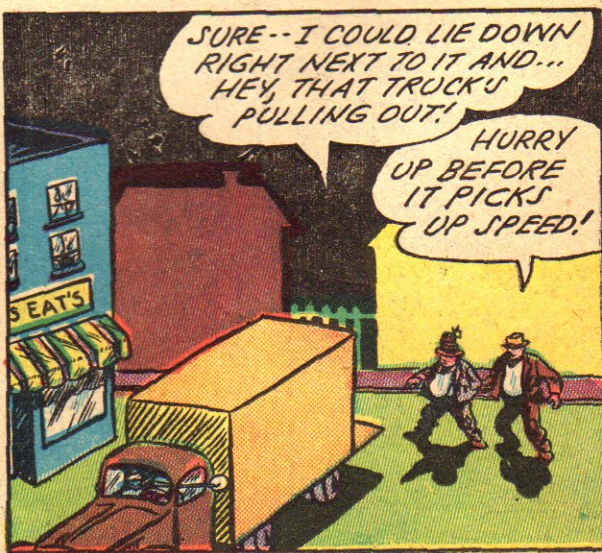
BOY, DAT
WAS WOIK,
PAL!

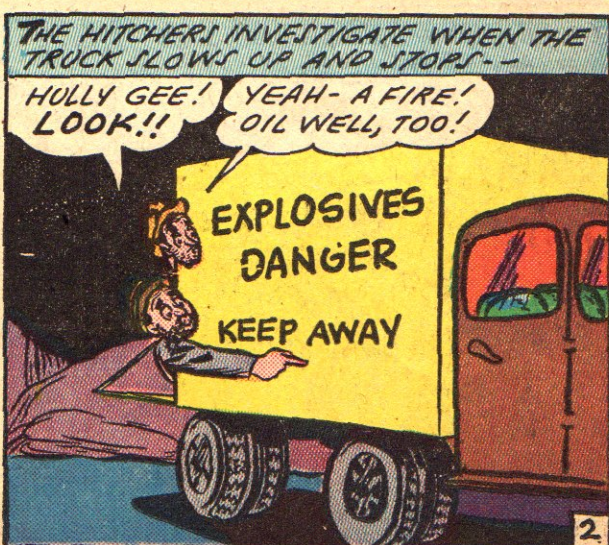
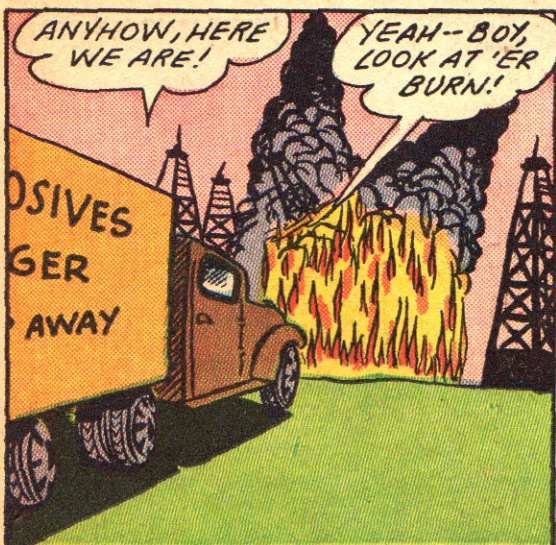
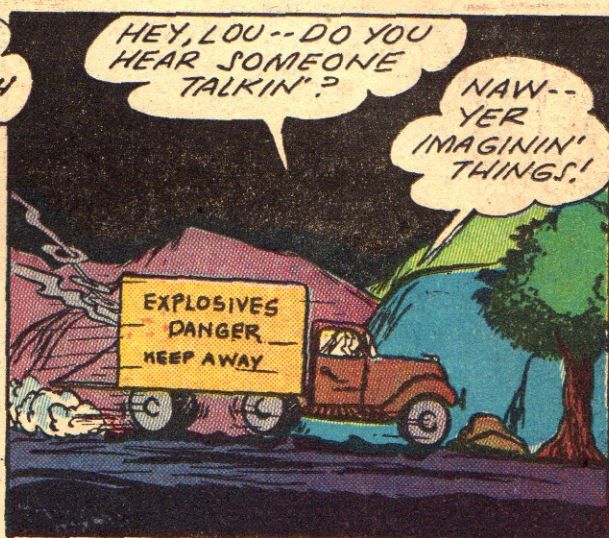
A LITTLE HONEST
WORK IS GOOD
FOR YOU,
IRON HEAD!



SURE--I COULD LIE DOWN
RIGHT NEXT TO IT AND...
HEY, THAT TRUCK'S
PULLING OUT!

HURRY
UP BEFORE
IT PICKS
UP SPEED!







GUESS WE
BETTER
GET OUT!

THAT WAS
A SHORT
RIDE!

IN FACT...
OMIGOSH!
LOOK WHAT
WE'VE BEEN
RIDIN' ON!



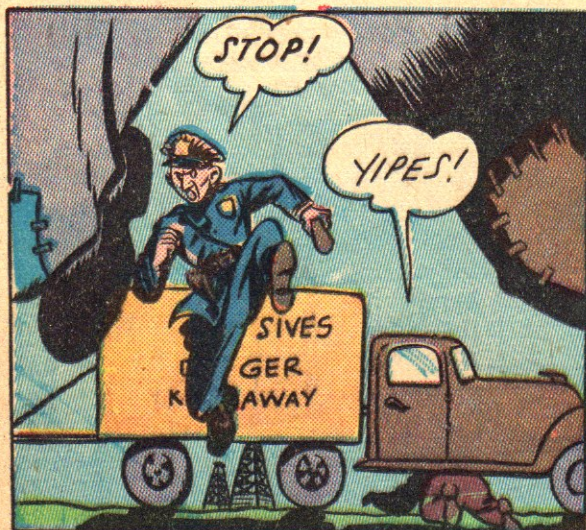
ULP-- WE'RE
JUST LUCKY
IT WASN'T
SHORTER!



HEY, YOU BUMS--
WHAT'RE YOU
DOIN' HERE?

UH-OH!
COPS!

I DON'T
LIKE
HIS
VOICE!



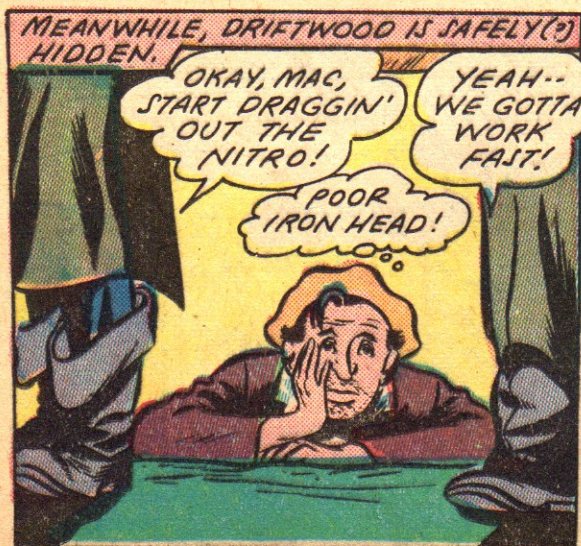
STOP!

YIPES!



OKAY, YOU SABOTEUR,
WHAT DO YA THINK
YOU'RE DOING AROUND
HERE?

I AIN'T NO
SABOTEUR!

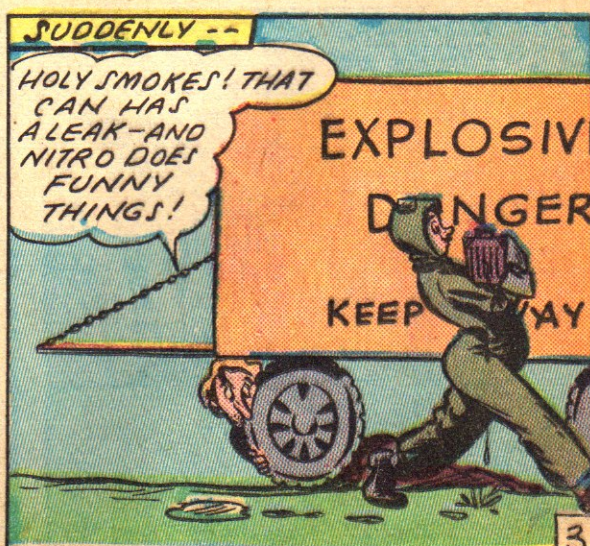


MEANWHILE, DRIFTWOOD IS SAFELY(?)
HIDDEN.

OKAY, MAC,
START DRAGGIN'
OUT THE
NITRO!

YEAH--
WE GOTTA
WORK
FAST!

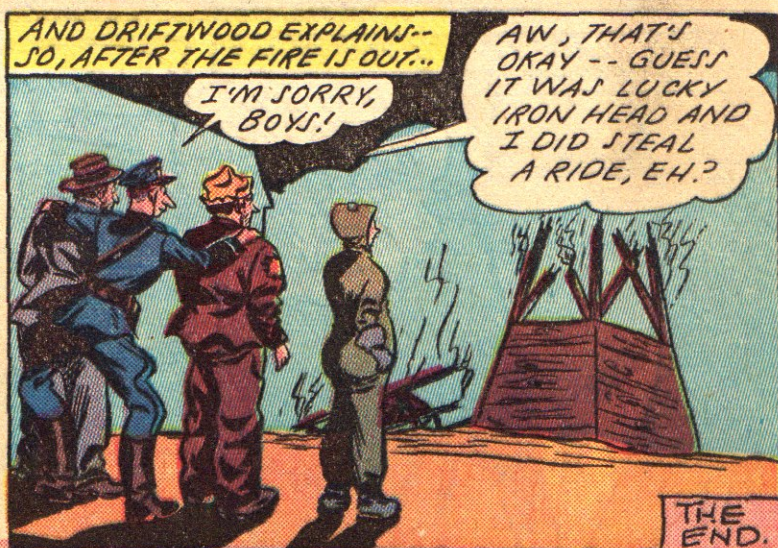
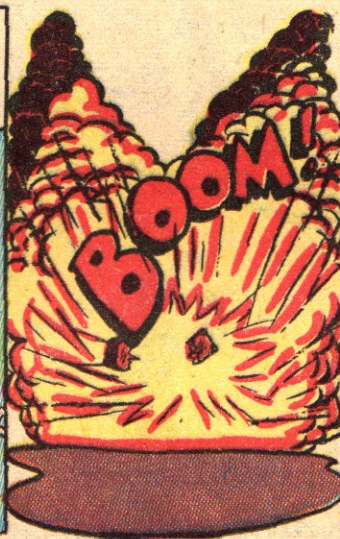
POOR
IRON HEAD!



SUDDENLY --

HOLY SMOKES! THAT
CAN HAS
A LEAK--AND
NITRO DOES
FUNNY
THINGS!

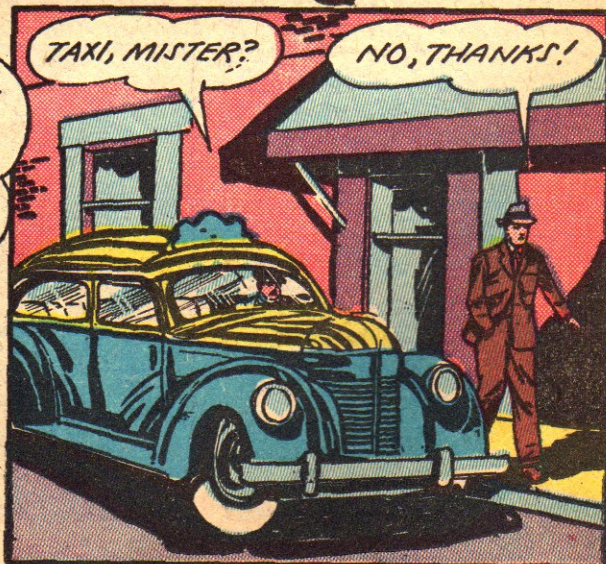
EXPLOSIVES
DANGER
KEEP AWAY



THE STEEL FIST



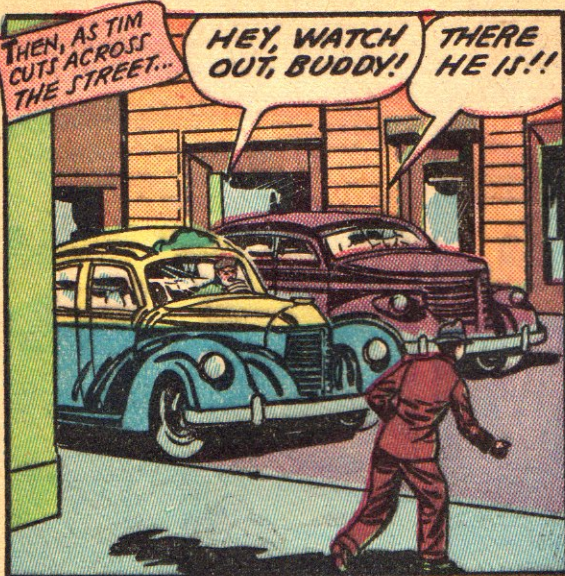
TIMOTHY SLADE LEAVES THE PLANT ONE EVENING...



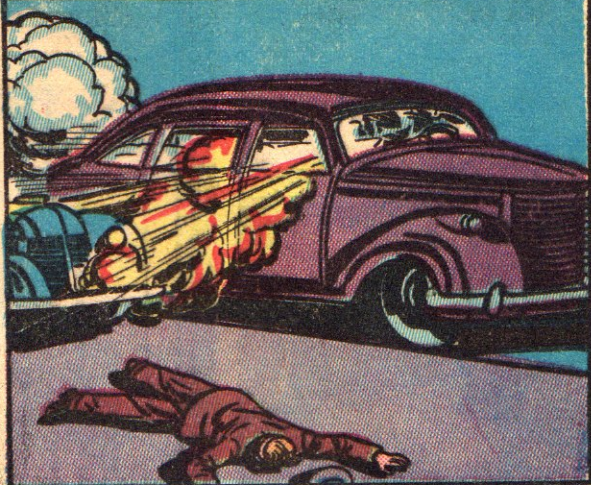
THEN, AS TIM CUTS ACROSS THE STREET...

HEY, WATCH OUT, BUDDY!

THERE HE IS!!



A FLASHING SHEET OF BULLETS SLICES THROUGH THE AIR - - -

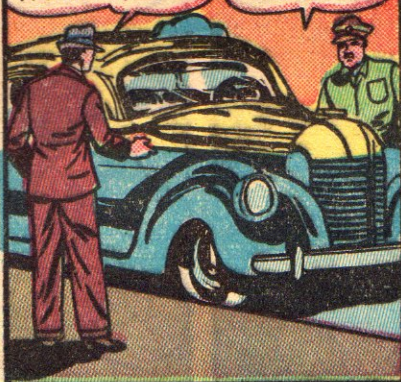


HEY, BUDDY, D-DID THEY GET YOU?



I'M ALL RIGHT-- THANKS TO YOUR WARNING! HOW ABOUT THAT CAB RIDE HOME NOW?

SURE -- HOP IN! IF THE BUGGY STILL WOIKS!



HEY, WHY DID THEY WANT TO PLUG YA? WHYN'T YA GO TO THE COPS?

I DON'T KNOW, THERMOPYLE -- NOT THE POLICE YET!

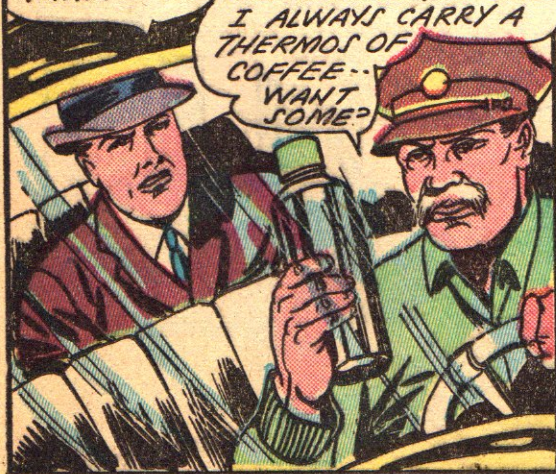


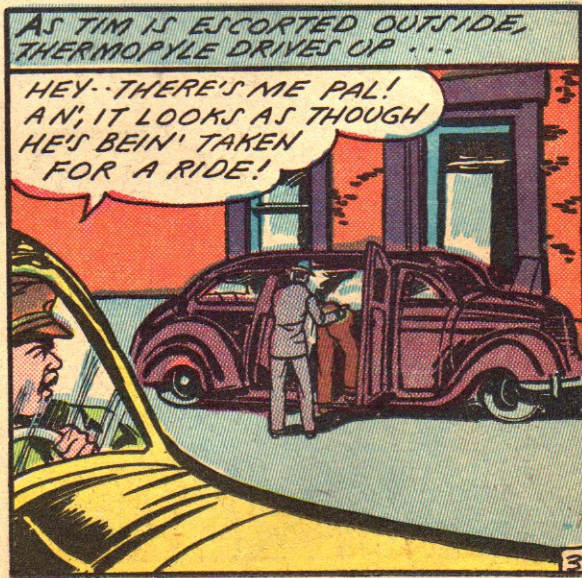
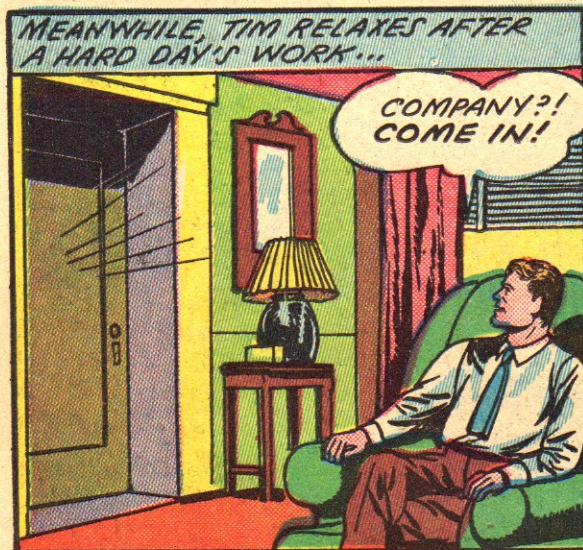
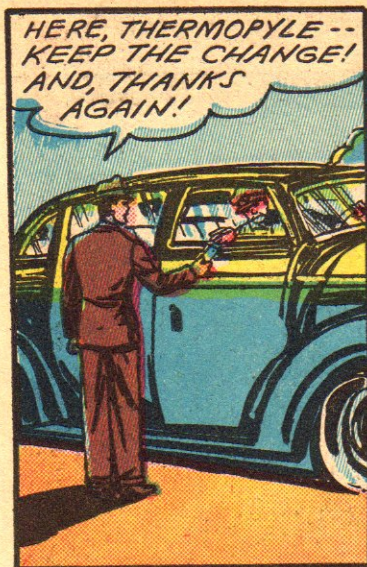
SAY, WHERE DID YOU GET THAT NAME?

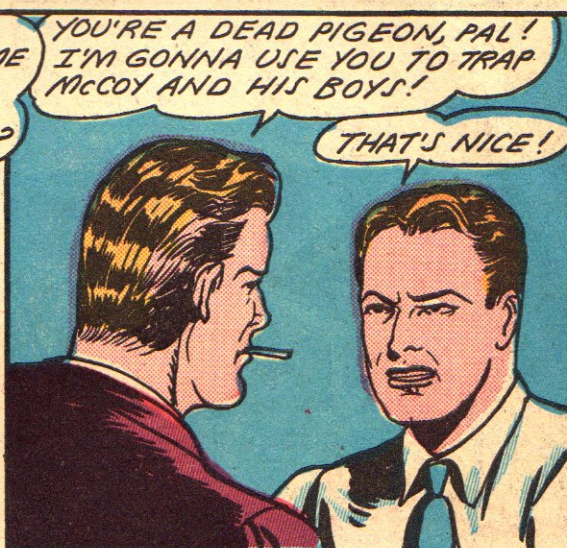
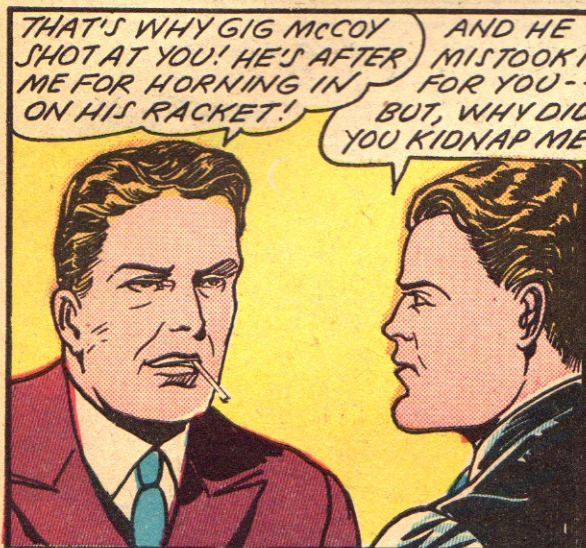
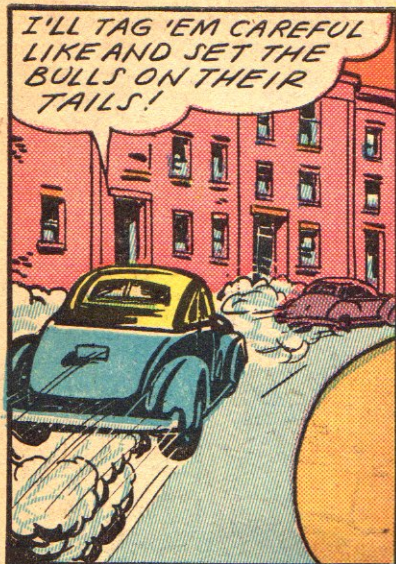
OH, MY NAME'S NED PYLE-- BUT THE BOYS CALLED ME THERMOPYLE 'CAUSE I ALWAYS CARRY A THERMOS OF COFFEE-- WANT SOME?

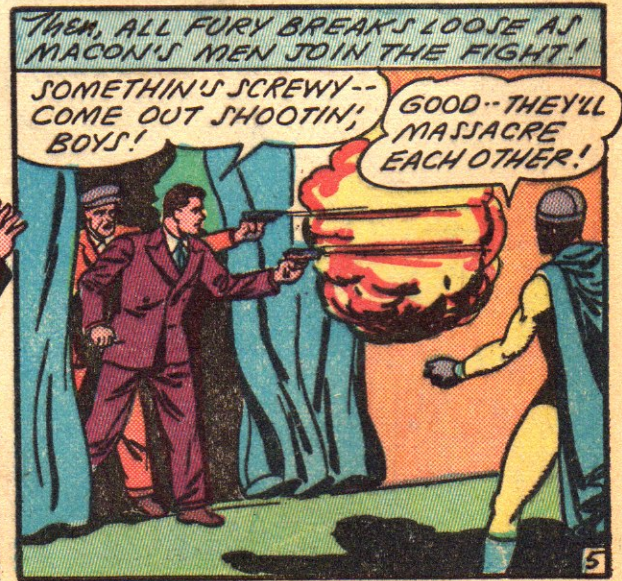
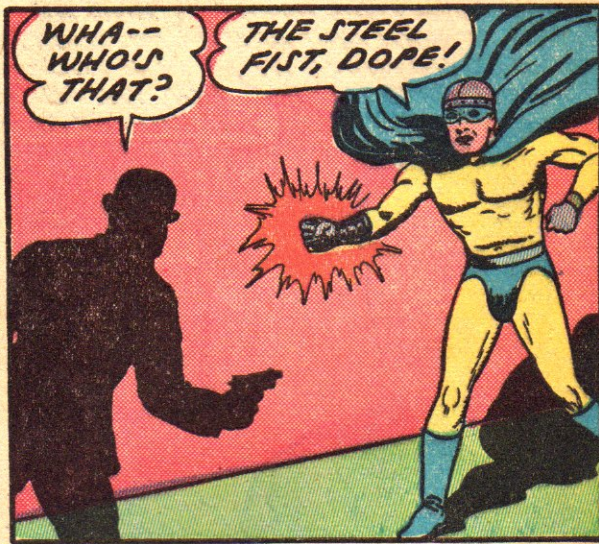
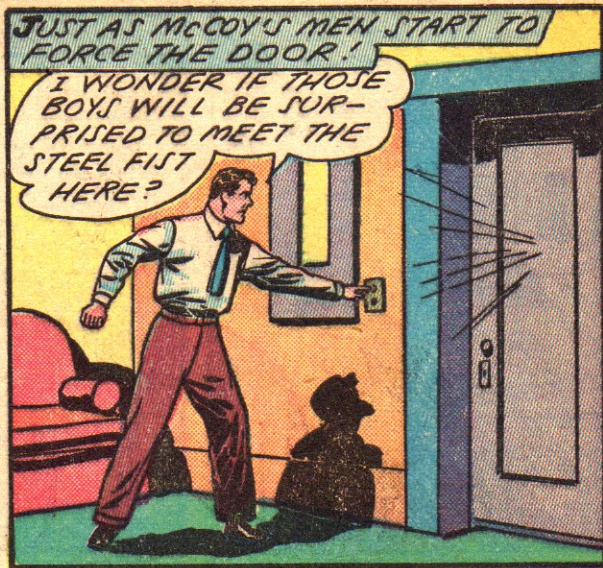
NO, THANKS-- THIS IS MY PLACE HERE!

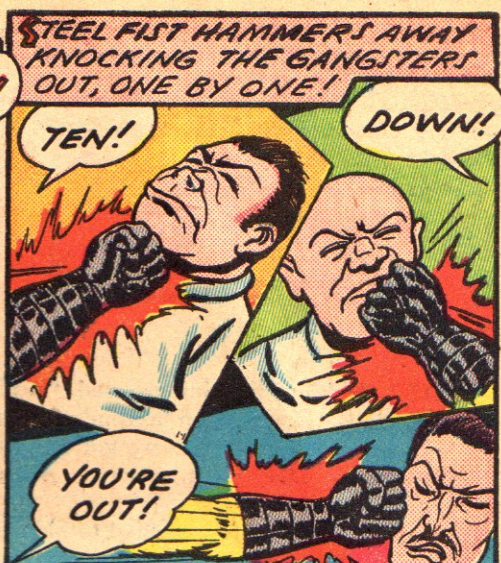
YES, SIR! WELL, TAKE IT EASY AND WATCH YOUR STEP!











TIM RELATES EXACTLY WHAT OCCURRED-- ONLY OMITTING TO MENTION THAT HE WAS THE STEEL FIST!

THEN THE STEEL FIST RAN OUT!

WELL, WE'VE GOT TWO ENTIRE GANGS OF THE BIGGEST BLACK MARKET RACKETEERS!



OF COURSE, I'M ONLY GUESSIN' BUT THAT STEEL FIST MUSTA MOVED I DON'T PRETTY FAST TO GET OUT THINK HE'D OF THAT PLACE BEFORE WE CAME!

LIKE YOU TO GUESS, THERMY!



WATCH FOR STEEL FIST IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF BLUE CIRCLE!

SMART ACT

"**T**HIS," Grubby Hawkins growled, "is git-tin' good. Onest upon a time we had men drivin' trucks. Then we got a bunch of dames. Now . . . we've got an actor. A ham actor, at that."

"So what?" Willie Gregg turned to hide his amused grin. "This guy ain't gonna beat you out of anything." He added after a moment's thought, "I'll admit he's a phony. An' that label of his . . . Nathaniel Fuller. Isn't there some-thin' else goes in between—?"

"P." Grubby moaned. "Pendexter. Can yuh imagine? Nathaniel Pendexter Fuller—oh, oh. Watch it!"

The big "horse" and trailer leading them had suddenly blinked its tail light warningly, then pulled over to the side of the road. Willie eased the air on and they tumbled out onto the dirt road.

Together they walked up front. Nate Fuller had already dismounted, was standing in the glare of headlights, into which rose a veil of yellow dust. Grubby moved out—

"Hold it," a voice snarled. "Right where you are!"

Instantly both men froze in their tracks. Willie Gregg could see Nate Fuller and the other men, three of them with rifles. Nate already had his paws shoulder high.

"Stick-up," Willie growled. "Hey! It's those three wise guys, Joe, Pete an' Artie! Remember? This is the bunch who tried to do business with us when we stopped back at Silverstone. Something's funny—"

Nate Fuller whirled. Desperately he lunged for the safety of the outer darkness—

INSTANTLY Joe's rifle smashed. And the escaping man cried out, stumbled and sprawled into the weeds at the bottom of the gully.

Grubby chattered, "Yellow! Guess he's a cooked duck now!"

"That's a hint," Joe mouthed thinly. "If you guys are bright enough to take it! Okay, Pete, Artie. Load 'em into the trailer and let's breeze."

A while later the big horse and trailer again jerked to a stop and Willie and Grubby were

herded outside, across an opening and into a ramshackle barn. Cautiously Willie peered about him, noting the piled up cases against the wall. There must have been hundreds of them, he realized. Probably the stuff these racketeers wanted to smuggle across the line. Bootleg maybe . . .

"The state cops got wise," Joe explained, mopping sweat off his thin face with the back of his hand. "We've gotta get this stuff across into the next state. You guys start packing it into the trailers. Get going . . . and if you don't feel like it, remember your buddie!"

Grubby Hawkins shouldered a case, carted it outside and up into the big trailer. Willie followed closely. He felt an uneasy quirk of fear inside him and had a job keeping his legs going straight. Nate had been a good guy in his way. He'd worked hard, never complaining when they had to make long hauls that kept them going all night. He'd been generous with his money. No, Nate hadn't been a bad guy.

"Cutthroats," Willie grumbled. "Shootin' a guy down . . . yuh don't even know fer sure he's dead—"

"Git goin'," Joe snarled. "I winged 'im. And there ain't help for miles . . . " Joe paused, staring. "Hey! Look. Over there—!"

Everyone whirled warily and Willie Gregg stared toward the big window. But it was empty and black.

"It—it's a face!" Joe shrieked frantically. "It's dead. Clammy. It's all yellow like something buried—" The gun in his hand smashed once, twice—

Willie Gregg backed against a case. Maybe he'd missed it . . . or maybe Joe was seeing things.

"Git started!" Pete snarled, waving his gun at Willie and Grubby. "Y'better take a snort, Joe. You're seein' things. An' pass it around. Except to these guys!"

UNWILLINGLY Willie and Grubby got going. It was hard work toting these cases out. Willie shoulders were sore already, and they hadn't begun to fill the big trailer. And

there was plenty still left to go. By the time they got done . . .

Again Joe's shrill yelp of fear brought them all up tensely. Willie peered furtively toward the window, but again there was nothing. Nothing. Beside him Grubby Hawkins' breath came in short snorts.

"That egg's givin' me the creeps!" Grubby snarled. "He's seein' things—"

Pete snarled, "Snap out of it, Joe! What in hell's eating you?"

Joe spun. His face was ghastly, his thin body shaking violently. "I saw it!" he screeched. "It was right outside there! That face . . . don't try to kid me, wise guy. I saw it, I tell you . . ." He whirled. "I'm gonna find out!" he shrilled. "I can't stand it—"

He plunged out the door into the night beyond. Silence settled over the waiting men. Pete shifted his bulky body uneasily, swinging his gun around to cover their captives.

"Joe's got it bad," Pete grated. "I didn't think—"

Outside there was the sudden sharp bark of a shot, then silence save for the wind about the rickety barn, the breaking of aging boards and beams.

The thin man came through the door, his body shaking as he peered back out. He chattered, "I got 'im! It's okay now. He wasn't dead . . . but he sure is this time!"

"Okay, okay," Pete soothed. "Now maybe we can get finished loadin'."

WEARILY Willie Gregg got to lame legs. This business was beginning to get the best of him. Uneasily he kept an eye on Joe. His gun had disappeared but Willie wasn't taking chances.

The pile of cases never seemed to grow any smaller. Nor did the big trailers seem to have any end of room. At the rate they were going—

Grubby and Willie paused and Willie saw the other two men watching their thin-faced pal.

His hand was raised to his face. Slowly he stroked it as if wiping something away. He turned, eyes glassy, staring.

"Something . . . touched me!" His voice was a hoarse whisper. "Something's at my throat! Something—" He screamed suddenly and recoiled, throwing up his arms as if for protection.

His body jerked violently forward and his hands clawed in front of him as if there were hands at his throat. He was tugging at them, staggering backward, twisting, jerking. His face turned yellowish, his eyes protruded from his head. His mouth was open, his tongue licking

clumsily at his lips upon which foam appeared. Slowly his body sank to the floor, jerking spasmodically, to lie tautly twisted with arched back.

Hypnotically, Pete and his pal advanced, as if drawn by a magnet. Their faces were beaded with sweat. They stopped, advanced again . . .

"He . . . make sure he's . . . dead!" Pete whispered. "Something . . . choked him. He's holding onto . . . something . . . at his throat—"

Pete bent down warily, eyes fixed upon the rigid body on the floor. He reached forward, touched one of the clenched hands . . .

"He's stiff!" Pete's voice was hollow, scared. "I—I can't move his hands!"

GRUBBY HAWKINS launched his thick body in a flying tackle. His arms wrapped themselves around Pete's legs, smashing him off his feet and over onto his back. His head struck the rotting floor.

Arty whipped his gun up. It was pointed full at Grubby's thick body.

The man on the floor came to sudden life. His feet flashed out, struck Arty's legs back of the knees. Arty's gun roared, but it was too high. His body catapulted to the floor and the revolver went flying.

Willie Gregg hurled himself forward and pinned the racketeer to the floor easily.

"Lie still, dang yuh!" Willie snarled, twisting an arm around and down. "Or I'll bust every bone in your body—"

The "dead man" rolled over, came swiftly to his feet with a bound. He was grinning down at them, even laughing—

"Took you men long enough to snap out of it!" he cried. "I was hoping you'd catch these hoodlums while I had their attention—"

"Nate!" Grubby gasped. "I—we thought—"

Nathaniel Pendexter Fuller laughed softly. "Just acting. I struck Joe down when he came after me. But I lost his revolver in the dark, and couldn't find it. I made up to resemble him and came back, hoping to tip you two off. I didn't have much to work with . . . was a little frightened I might not deceive these two killers. I had a long hike to get here, too. Fortunately, Joe's shot only caused a bad flesh wound. That was when I put another over on him. . . ."

Grubby Hawkins shook his shaggy head mournfully. "You're all man," he said admiringly. "I take my lid off to yuh, bub. If yuh only talked like a man—"

Nathaniel Pendexter Fuller laughed. "Okay, Butch," he said. "Let's tie these bums up, an' get the blazes out of here. We've still got work to do!"

THE END

SLAPHAPPY GRANDPAPPY

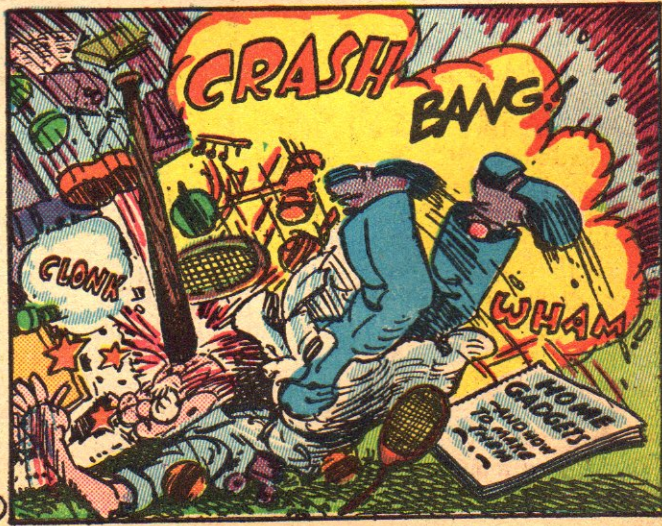
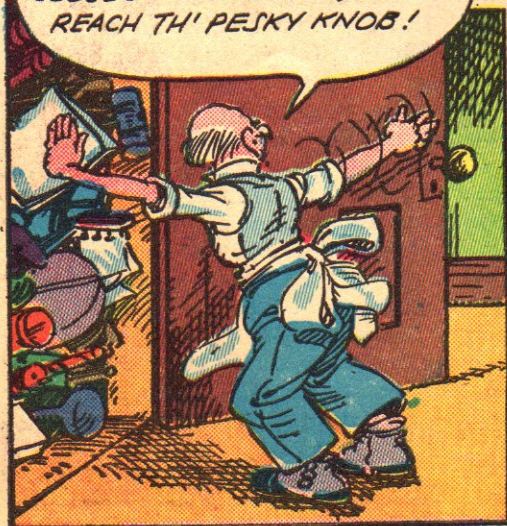
SLAPHAPPY GRANDPAPPY HAS BEEN DRAFTED BY THE FAMILY (HIS DAUGHTER AND HIS TWIN GRANDCHILDREN) TO RUN THE HOUSE, COOK, WASH DISHES, AND CLEAN! PS: HE DOESN'T LIKE IT!!

I'VE ALWAYS SAID, QUOTE. "WIMMEN HAVE NO EFFICIENCY IN RUNNIN' A HOUSE - WHEN THEY GIT A MEAL, THEY USE EVERY DISH AND PAN IN TH' PLACE!"

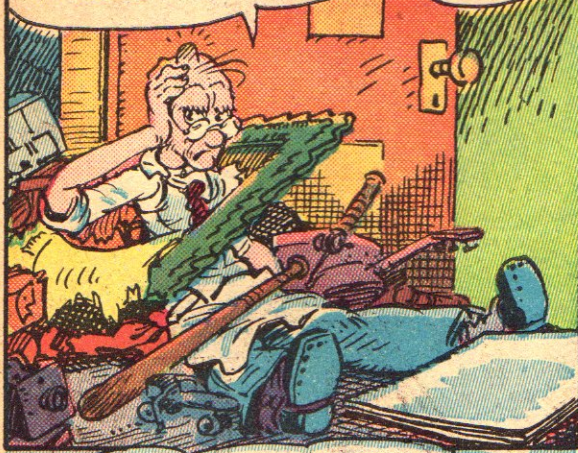
I CLEANED THIS WHOLE HOUSE YESTERDAY... LOOK AT IT NOW! IT'S A MESS! THEM DANG TWINS NEVER PUT ANYTHING AWAY - THEY JUST DROP EVERYTHING WHERE THEY GIT THROUGH WITH IT!

THERE! NOW, IF I CAN ONLY GIT THIS CLOSET DOOR CLOSED - DANGIT, I CAN'T REACH TH' PESKY KNOB!

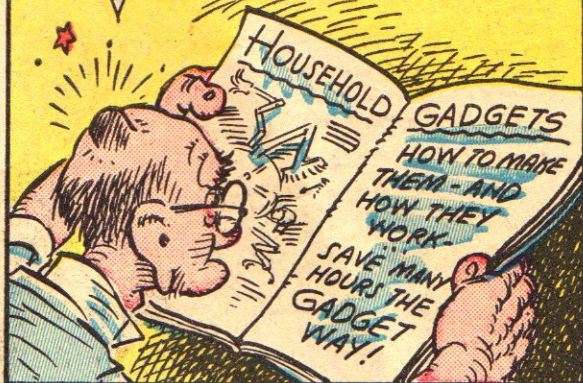
I'LL CHUCK ALL THIS STUFF INTO THIS HALL CLOSET! IF THEY WANT IT AGAIN, THEY CAN JUST DIG IT OUT!



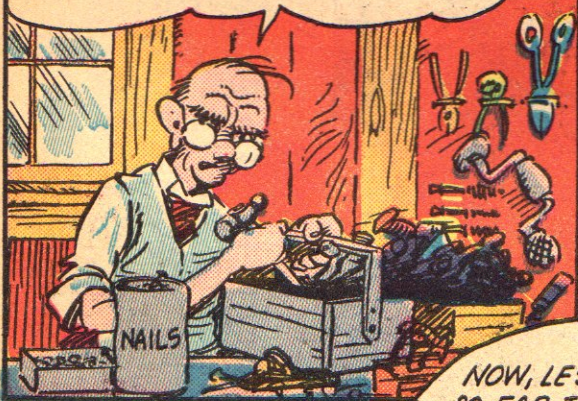
SOMETHINGS GOTTA BE DONE 'BOUT
GITTIN' EFFICIENCY IN THIS
HOUSE !!



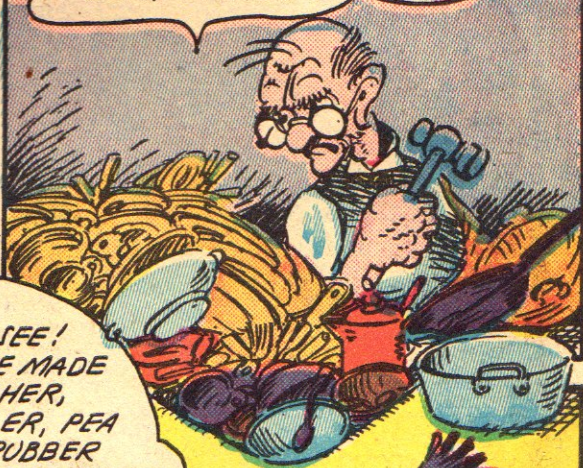
HM-MM- AND I DO BELIEVE I'VE
GOT TH' ANSWER RIGHT HERE IN
THIS MAGAZINE! 'SWORTH TRYIN'
ANYHOW --



I ALWAYS DID SAY, IF WIMMEN
WOULD USE THEIR BRAINS - HOUSE
WORK COULD BE MADE A PLEASURE
INSTEAD OF JUST DRUDGERY!

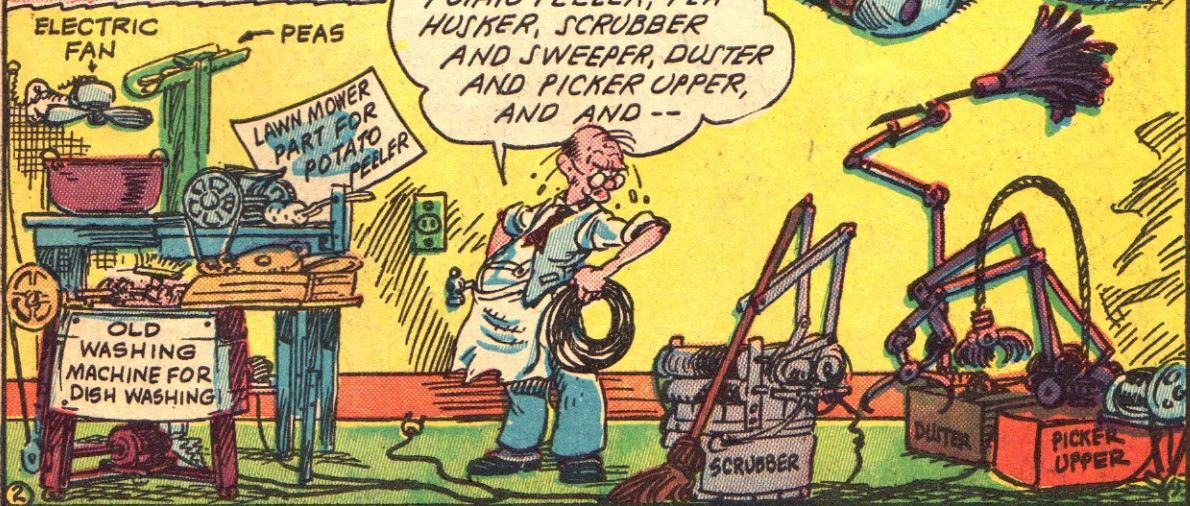


WITH MY BRAINS PLUS MY SKILL, I
WILL MODERNIZE THIS HOUSE INTO
AN EFFICIENT ESTABLISHMENT. 'NOW,
TH' FIRST THING TO MAKE, IS A
MACHINE TO WASH THOSE
PESKY DISHES!

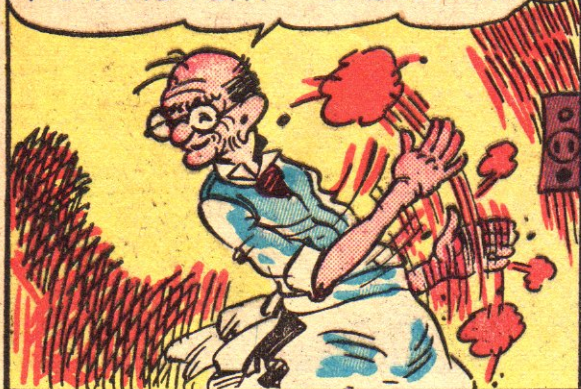


NOW, LET'S SEE!
SO FAR, I'VE MADE
A DISH WASHER,
POTATO PEELER, PEA
HUSKER, SCRUBBER
AND SWEEPER, DUSTER
AND PICKER UPPER,
AND AND --

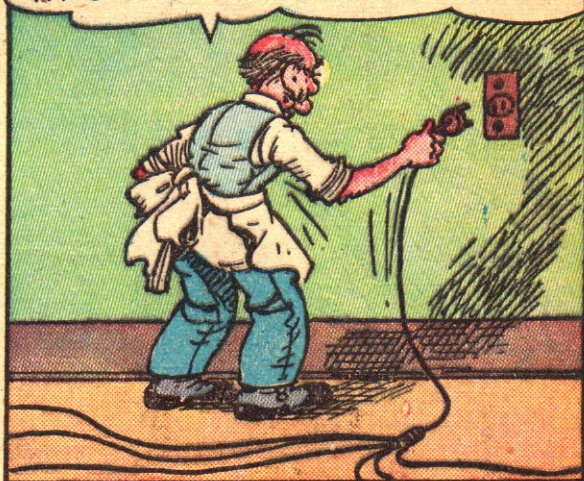
FOUR HOURS LATER . . .



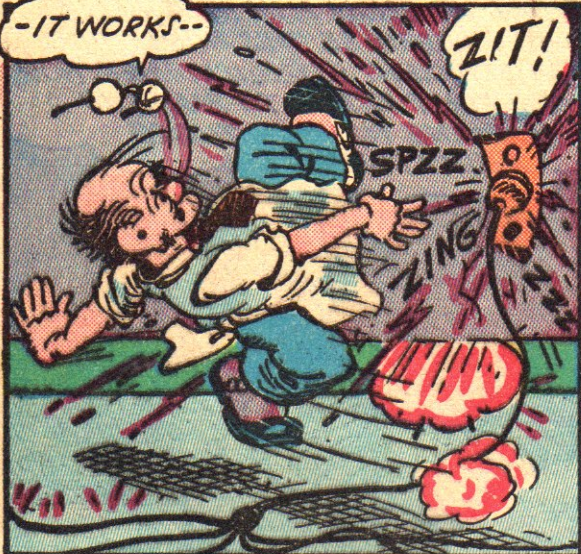
AH - NOW I GUESS EVERYTHING IS READY - I'LL START THINGS TO HUMMIN' 'ROUND HERE AND GIT TH' HOUSE WORK DONE IN NO TIME FLAT - I BETCHA!



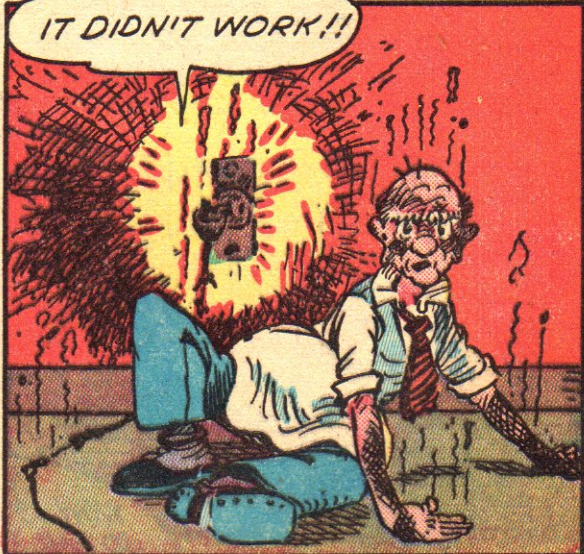
I'LL PLUG THIS LEAD WIRE INTO TH' SOCKET AND SEE HOW - -



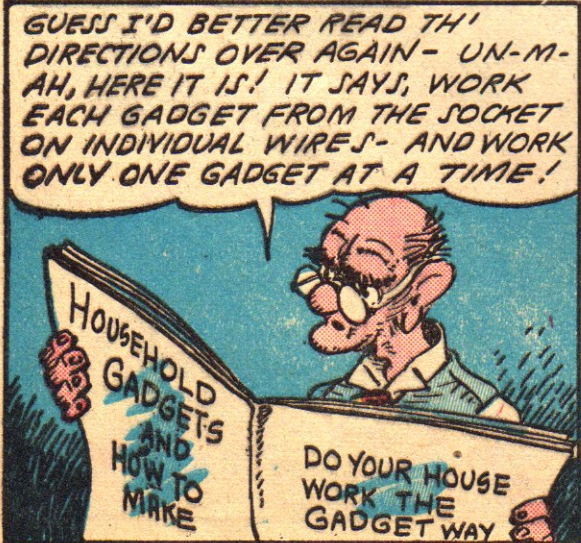
-IT WORKS--



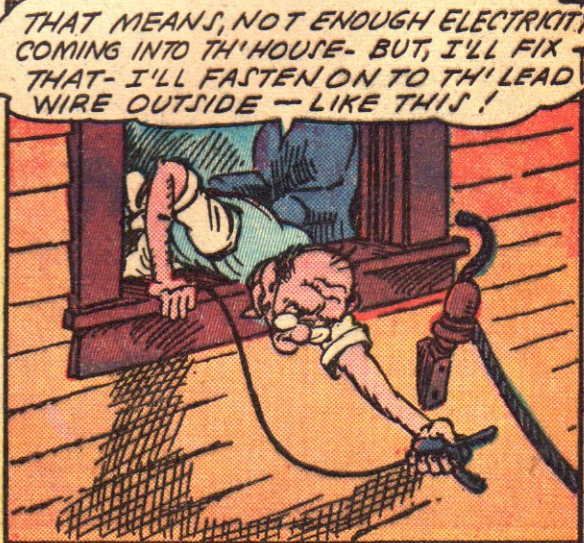
IT DIDN'T WORK!!



GUESS I'D BETTER READ TH' DIRECTIONS OVER AGAIN - UN-M-AH, HERE IT IS! IT SAYS, WORK EACH GADGET FROM THE SOCKET ON INDIVIDUAL WIRES - AND WORK ONLY ONE GADGET AT A TIME!



THAT MEANS, NOT ENOUGH ELECTRICITY COMING INTO TH' HOUSE - BUT, I'LL FIX THAT - I'LL FASTEN ON TO TH' LEAD WIRE OUTSIDE - LIKE THIS!



WOMAN'S WORK'S FROM
SUN TO SUN,
MY WORK'S
NEVER
DONE!

DANG'D-'NIF I
DIDN'T NEAR
FORGIT TO INVENT
A BED MAKIN'
GADGET!

JUNIOR'S ROOM- AND, AS
USUAL, A MESS! LOOK AT IT!
WHAT THAT KID
NEEDS IS A
HICKORY ROD!

CLUNK
CLANG!

LATER..

THERE- THAT TAKES
CARE OF TH' BED-
MAKIN'! I'VE GOT
ONE IN EACH ROOM!
I'LL BET DAUGHTER
WILL BE SURPRISED!

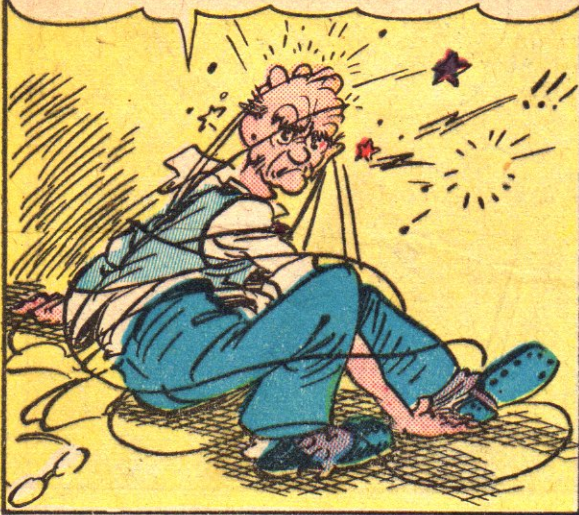
NOW I'LL RUN THESE WIRES, LEADIN' FROM
EACH BEDROOM, DOWN STAIRS--

BUMP!

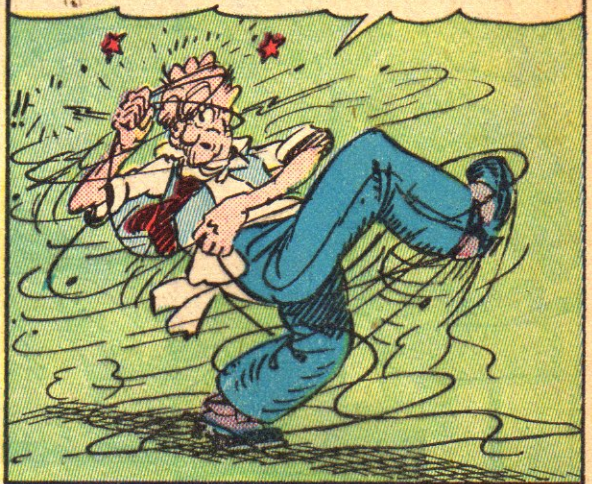
CRASH

THUMP!

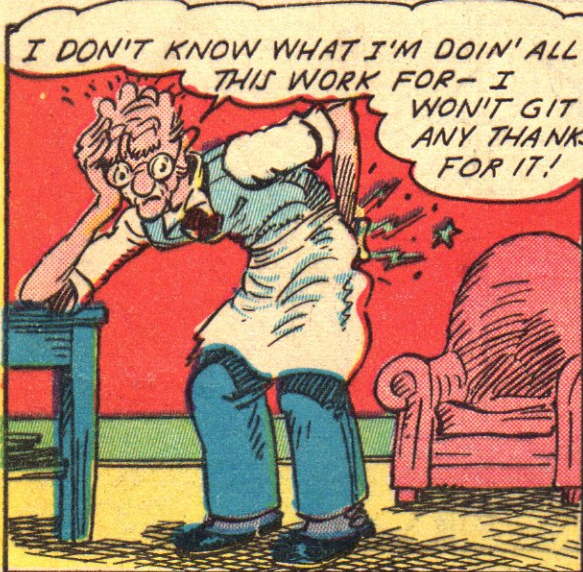
I MUST HAVE TRIPPED OVER SOMETHIN'!



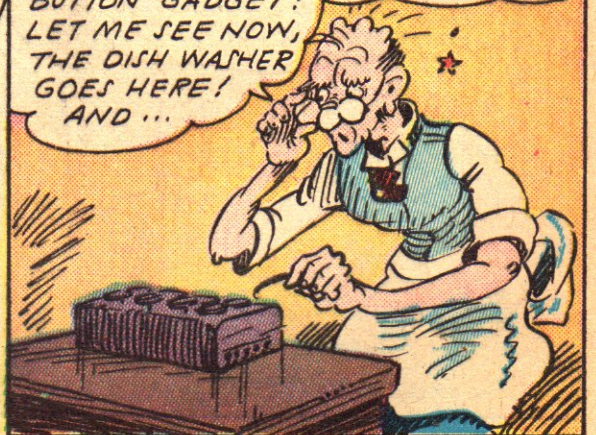
GOSH DANG IT! WHERE DID ALL THESE DING-BLASTED WIRES COME FROM?



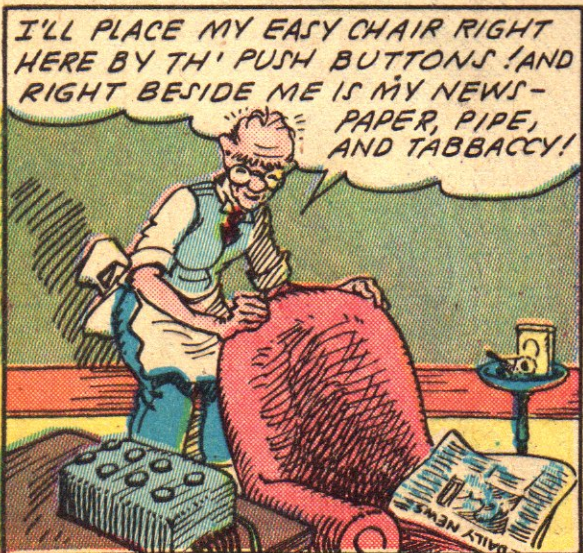
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOIN' ALL THIS WORK FOR- I WON'T GIT ANY THANKS FOR IT!



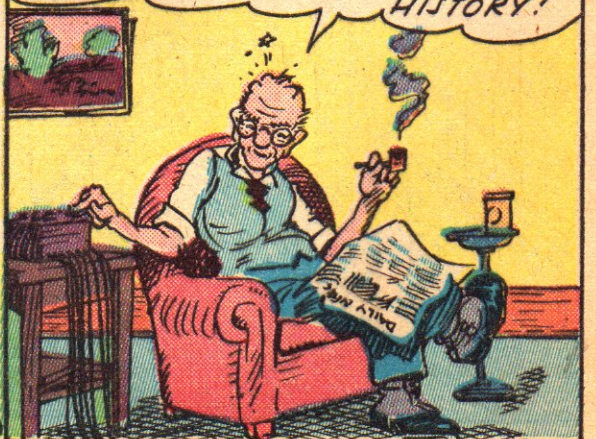
BUT, WHAT TH' HECK- I'LL FINISH TH' JOB- ALL I'VE GOT TO DO NOW IS TO RUN TH' WIRES TO THIS PUSH-BUTTON GADGET! LET ME SEE NOW, THE DISH WASHER GOES HERE! AND ...

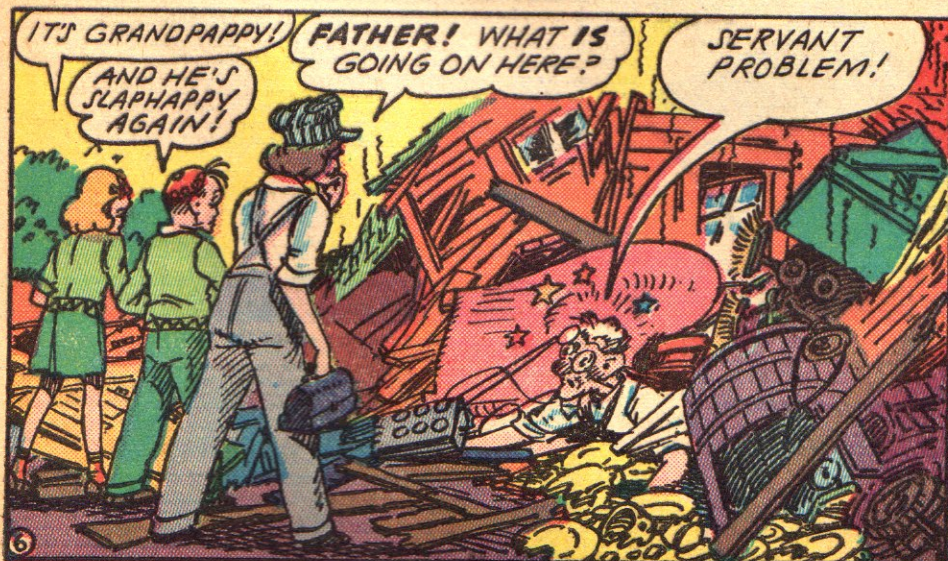
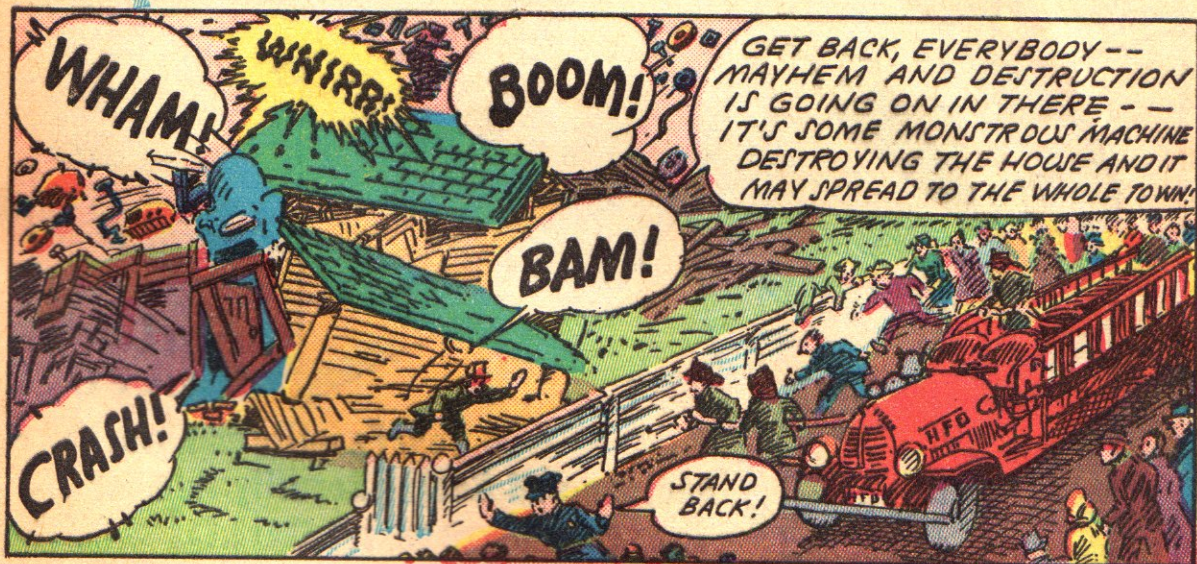
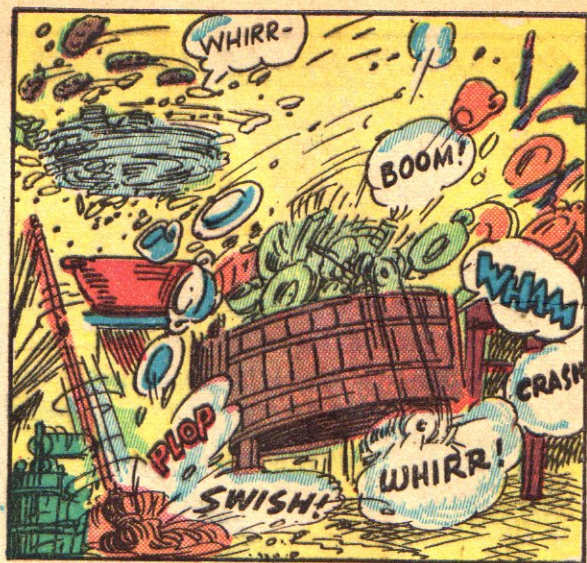
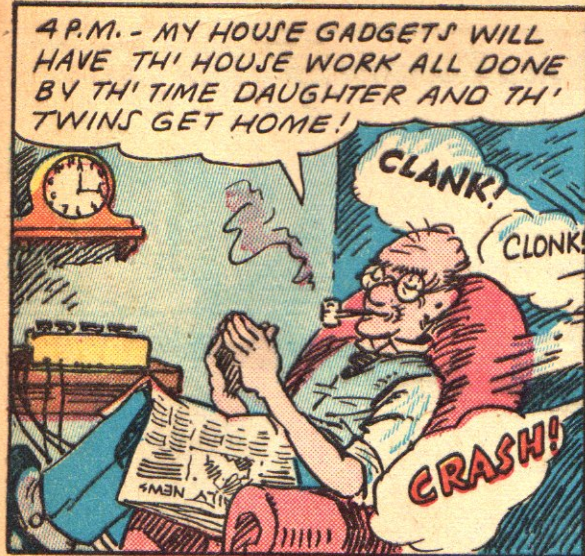


I'LL PLACE MY EASY CHAIR RIGHT HERE BY TH' PUSH BUTTONS! AND RIGHT BESIDE ME IS MY NEWS-PAPER, PIPE, AND TABBACCY!



WELL- NOW I'M ALL SET TO DO TH' HOUSE WORK- I'LL BET THIS DAY'S WORK WILL GO DOWN IN HISTORY!





SLAPHAPPY GRANDPAPPY IS NOW MORE THAN EVER OF THE OPINION THAT "WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE HOME" AND MAN'S PLACE - WELL, WHERE IS MAN'S PLACE? "DANG NAB IT, A MAN HAIN'T GOT NO PLACE NO MORE" SEE NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE OF THIS MAGAZINE FOR GRANDPAPPY'S NEXT ADVENTURE!

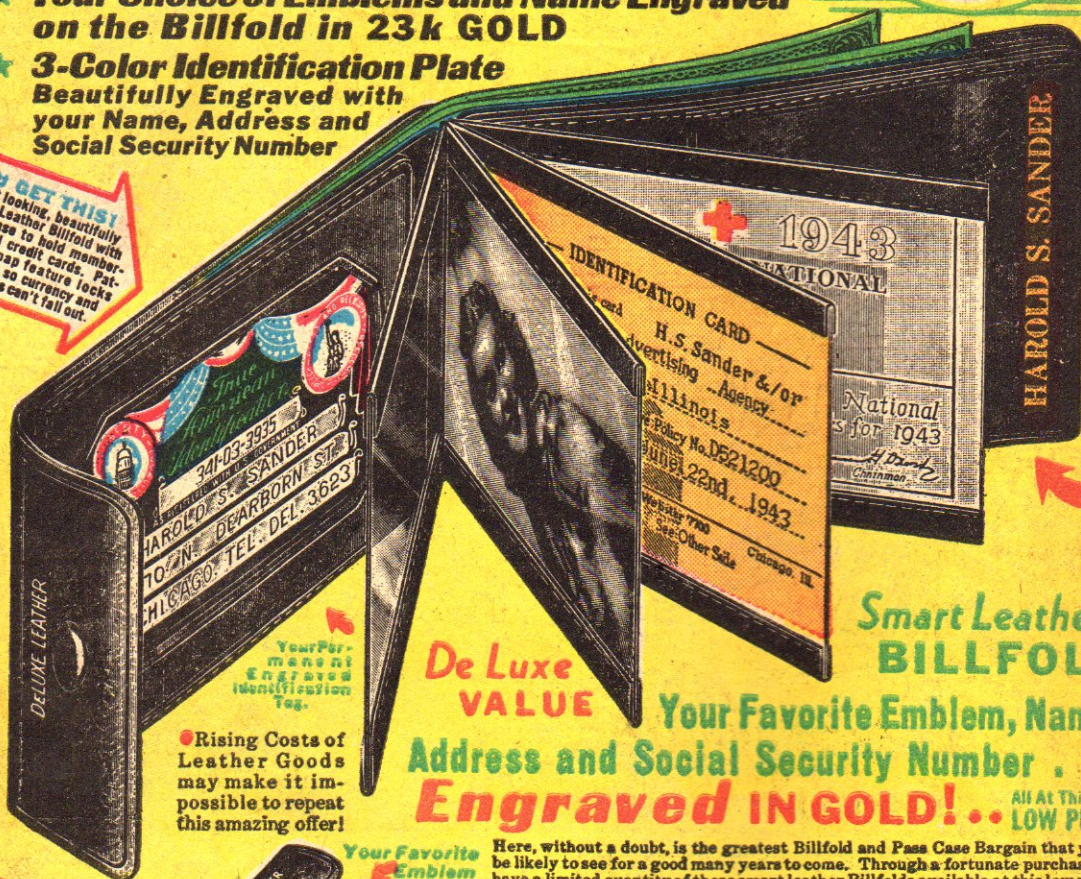
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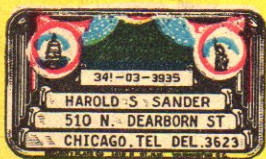
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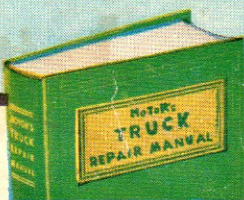
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